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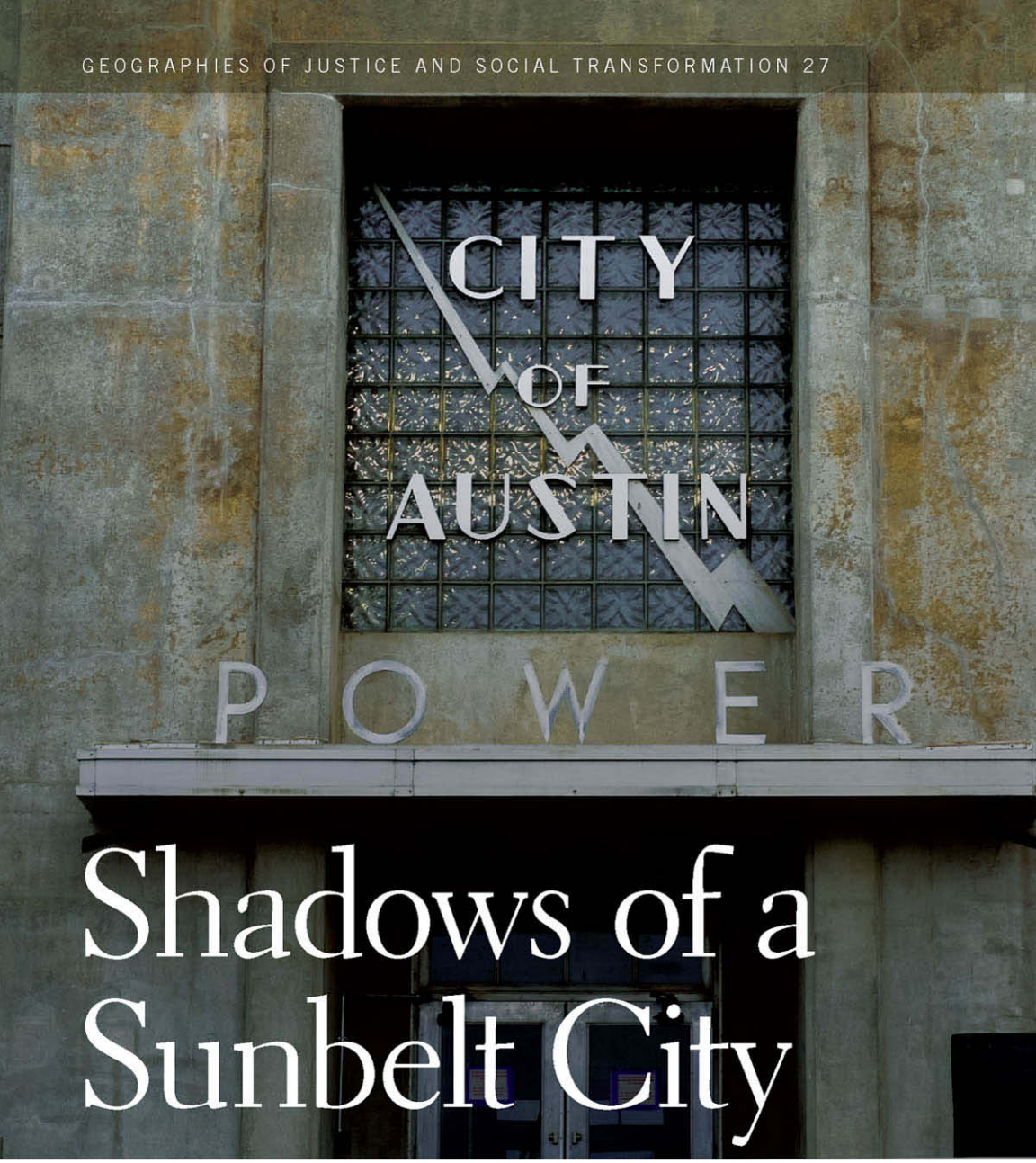

Shadows of a Sunbelt City

THE ENVIRONMENT, RACISM, AND THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY IN AUSTIN

ELIOT M. TRETTER

VISIT…

Shadows of a Sunbelt City

GEOGRAPHIES OF JUSTICE AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

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THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA PRESS
Athens

Chapter 4 was originally published in different form as "Sustainability and Neoliberal Urban Development: The Environment, Crime and the Remaking of Austin's Downtown," in *Urban Studies* 50, no. 11 (2013): 2222–2227, and online before print March 6, 2013, doi: 10.1177/0042098013478234.

Chapter 5 was originally published in different form as "Contesting Sustainability: 'Smart Growth' and the Redevelopment of Austin's Eastside," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37 (January 2013): 297–310. © Urban Research Publications Limited.

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Athens, Georgia 30602
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Set in 10/12.5 Minion Pro by Kaelin Chappell Broaddus

Printed and bound by Sheridan Books, Inc.
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Most University of Georgia Press titles are available from popular e-book vendors.

Printed in the United States of America
20 19 18 17 16 P 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Tretter, Eliot M.
Title: Shadows of a sunbelt city : the environment, racism, and the knowledge economy in Austin / Eliot M. Tretter.
Description: Athens : The University of Georgia Press, 2016. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2015023654 | ISBN 9780820344881 (hardcover : alkaline paper) | ISBN 9780820344898 (paperback : alkaline paper) | ISBN 9780820349091 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Urban ecology (Sociology)—Texas—Austin. | Racism—Texas—Austin. | Knowledge economy—Texas—Austin. | City planning—Texas—Austin. | Austin (Tex.)—Environmental conditions. | Austin (Tex.)—Race relations. | Austin (Tex.)—Economic conditions. | University of Texas at Austin. | Universities and colleges—Social aspects—Texas—Austin. | Universities and colleges—Environmental aspects—Texas—Austin.
Classification: LCC HT243.U62 A9795 2016 | DDC 307.7609764/31—dc23 LC record available at http://lccn.loc.gov/2015023654

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is hard to thank everyone I have relied on to write this book, but below I would like to acknowledge the generous help and support of a number of people and institutions.

I would like to thank the following librarians for research assistance: Evan Hocker and Roy Hinojosa at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History; Mike Miller, Gloria Espitia, Molly Hults, Karen Riles, and Daniel Alonso at the Austin History Center; Stanley Fanaras from the National Archives; and Servando Hernandez at the Travis County Records Department. These people provided their time and support and often went out their way to find additional sources of information for me. The descriptive richness of many of the cases studies found in this book can be attributed directly to their assistance.

I also wish to thank the following individuals for allowing me to interview them: Susana Almanza, Bill Bunch, Bill Spelman, Frank Cooksey, Pike Powers, Robert Knight, Will Wynn, Jerry Rusthoven, Mark Yznaga, Glenn West, Mike Clark-Madison, Bruce Todd, Daryl Slusher, Ron Kessler, Oscar Garza, Marcos de Leon, Charles Heimsath, Mary Arnold, Cory Walton, Max Nofziger, and Michael Wilt. I learned a great deal about Austin from my conversations with all of them. Additionally, I thank Michael Kanin, Elizabeth Pagano, Nora Ankrum, and Heidi Gerbracht for connecting me with people to interview and for offering interesting interpretations of Austin events.

Several institutions and colleagues helped in various ways with this project. First, I would like to thank the Department of Geography and the Environment at the University of Texas at Austin, where I was a lecturer for many years. In particular, thanks to Leo Zonn, Kenneth Young, and Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach for supporting my affiliation with that department. In addition to conducting research with that department's support, I enjoyed teaching many classes there, especially The Modern American City. Teaching afforded me the opportunity to put a lot of the research contained in this book into a macro-analytic framework. I would also like to acknowledge the generous grant I received from UT-Austin's

Institute for Urban Policy Research and Analysis, and I thank King Davis and Eric Tang for supporting my research on segregation. Thanks also to the Department of Geography at the University of Calgary, especially John Yackel, and to the Faculty of Arts, which provided some financial support for research. Finally, I appreciate the support of current and former staff of the University of Georgia Press, and including Derek Krissoff, Beth Snead, Mick Gusinde-Duffy, John Joerschke, and Jennifer Comeau. Series editor Nik Heynen has been a real supporter of this project since I first proposed it to him many years ago. Thanks also to Erica Schoenberger and my other, anonymous reviewer, who read an earlier version of this book and provided me with valuable insights and comments.

I would be remiss not to acknowledge the myriad contributions of several professional friends. I am grateful to Richard Heyman, Benjamin Brower, Andrew Busch, Byron Miller, Robert Resch, Roger Baker, Joshua Long, Sarah Dooling, Marie Le Guen, and Bo McCarver for their feedback on earlier drafts of my manuscript. I would also like to give a special thanks to Elizabeth Mueller, who, in addition to always giving me great feedback, provided some of the data used in chapter 5; M. Anwar Sounny-Slitine, who made maps and collected and processed data on the location of high-technology firms and toxic pollution as well as the geography of restrictive covenants; City of Austin demographer Ryan Robinson, who provided shape files and other data used in some maps and charts; Ken Martin and Bob Ward, for allowing me to use maps they produced; Robin Poitras, who created or edited the maps and graphs used in this book; and Daniel Austin Read, for taking the photo for the cover. I am also grateful to the MonkeyWrench Book Collective for allowing me to present earlier drafts of many chapters as public lectures; I benefited greatly from the critical feedback I received afterward. I am also grateful to Roger Keil, then editor of the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, for his feedback on a version of what became chapter 5, as well as Gordon Macleod, Robert Krueger, and David Gibbs for editing a special issue of *Urban Studies* that contains an article largely republished here as chapter 4.

Finally, I would like to recognize the invaluable support I received from lifelong friends and family. I thank my childhood friends Joshua Rosenblatt, for his excellent copyediting, and Francis Cody, William Nelson, and Michael Roller for being intellectual peers since we were wide-eyed teenagers. I would like to thank my parents, Carl and Beryl Tretter, my grandparents, Ruth and George Tretter, and my brother, Robb Tretter, and his family for their support over the last decade. Finally, I want to thank my partner, Nevena Ivanović, who read and edited many chapters and provided endless support and intellectual contributions. I dedicate this book to her.

Shadows of a Sunbelt City

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INTRODUCTION

> From the dirty brown river at the foot of the Avenue [First Street] to the heights of Mount Bonnell[,] life [in Austin] seems to move with a dream-like quality in which the hum of busy industry is mixed with somnambulant quietness.
>
> **Sara Lacy, draft for the Federal Writer's Project Guide to Austin**

> We live in a prosperous region, but within it are places and people who do not share that prosperity. It is sometimes difficult to call attention to the shadows when the Sun Belt shines so brightly. And given the persistence of the booster ethic and the tendency to emphasize the pleasant and positive, the task can be daunting.
>
> **David Goldfield, *Region, Race, and Cities: Interpreting the Urban South***

Openings

In the finale of the hit NBC TV show *The Office* (a remake of the popular British TV series by the same name), viewers learned that three of the show's main characters, Pam Beesly, Jim Halpert, and Darryl Philbin, would be moving from Scranton, Pennsylvania, to Austin, Texas, so that the two male characters could assume their dream jobs at a new small start-up firm. The characters' move is obviously one of upward mobility, given the show's sardonic depiction of their former jobs at the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company and everyday life in Scranton. At one point in the episode, Darryl, talking to another coworker, described Austin as "amazing. It's hot, the music is awesome, and the tacos are for real." Later in another scene, Pam and Jim tried to persuade another character, the socially awkward longtime Scranton native Dwight Schrute, to visit them in Austin. His response was, "For what? The art? The music? The incredible nightlife? No, thank you."

What is remarkable about the representations of Scranton and Austin portrayed in *The Office* is how much they reflect and reinforce popularly held opin-

ions about the two cities. While Scranton in the 1920s was a leading heavy industrial center for coal in the United States, today the city struggles to arrest its population decline and, according to one commentator, it "represents the typical declining rustbelt city. Often serving as the butt of jokes" (Rich 2013, 366). In contrast, Austin was barely a city in 1940, but since 1980 its population has grown more than 150 percent. It now represents the typical prospering innovative city. "Everywhere you look," observed Andrew Park, "cities big and small are trying to get in touch with their inner Austin" (Park 2007, 43). Over and over while undertaking and presenting my research, I have found Austin represented as something like the "non-Scranton": Austin is believed to have a great quality of life, to be a dynamic and creative place for new start-up firms and a base for artists and musicians, and to offer sunny weather, great food, and a fantastic nightlife. Certainly Austin is a dynamic city, and I would not argue that Austin is not a great place to live, work, or play (at least for certain kinds of people), but most of this book focuses on Austin's shadows—aspects of the city's history, everyday life, and transformations that have been hidden by the bright light this image casts.

Since the late nineteenth century, Austin has been Texas's state capital and home to the flagship campus of the University of Texas. In the last thirty years it has rapidly become a leading center for innovation in the high-technology, knowledge economy. Its quick climb as an industrial hub is often characterized in Panglossian terms (Florida 2005; Smilor, Gibson, and Kozmetsky 1989; Powers 2004). The story, frequently repeated, is that national and international high-technology firms were drawn to the Austin region because of its reputation for a high quality of life (particularly its low cost of living), its culture (entrepreneurial, bohemian, hedonistic, and/or tolerant), and its aggressive recruitment campaign by an enlightened and farsighted local growth coalition. The result was that practically overnight, a sleepy college and administrative town was rocketed into the center of the cognitive-creative-capitalist economy. According to this depiction, Austin's economic success resulted from a group of *a priori* special qualities and a harmonious and fortuitous relationship among members of a growth coalition (made up of the University of Texas, the state and local governments, and the local business community) that produced few net losses; one business professor from the University of Texas has gone so far as to dub this the Austin Model (Butler 2004, 2010).

I was initially motivated to write this book because I noticed after some research that the characterization mentioned in the previous paragraph about why and how Austin has grown seemed only partially correct. As I stress in varying ways throughout this book, the following two correctives need to be added to this account: (1) the region's industrial and urban development has come at a high cost, at least to some communities, and (2) there has been significant conflict among some members of the local growth coalition. Moreover, it was not so much preexisting local factors as the substantial reworking of local conditions,

particularly political and spatial arrangements, that helped propel the city's growth. I investigate how the University of Texas attained a much stronger role in the local growth coalition and how leading factions from the environmental and business communities became entwined in a common growth agenda. Furthermore, I point to the significance of UT's land development programs, both around the main campus and in other parts of the city, and how past planning decisions are important in attempts to promote more growth in Austin's central areas.

Over the course of my research, I began to notice that the dominant academic accounts given for the relationship between the knowledge economy and regional development patterns in the United States missed one central factor. Nearly everybody, including me, suggests that some small- or medium-sized cities, like Austin, have been able to emerge as significant regional centers of growth within the global economy because of the presence of a university (or a group of universities) and their vital role as the backbone of regional innovation networks. Several common reasons given in the literature for why universities have this remarkable role are that they produce lots of skilled labor, help encourage the development of spin-off firms, raise an area's reputation, and create a desirable cultural sensibility. Remarkably, none of these accounts addresses the issue of universities as land developers, which is the most essential factor I gleaned by examining the historical record (and this was before I had read Margaret O'Mara's remarkable book on the topic). In fact, what stands out in Austin is how large a role the federal government (in conjunction with the municipality), and then later the State of Texas, had in creating the industrial landscape in Austin, primarily because they empowered the university not only as an institution of higher learning, but as a land developer. This fundamental role of universities changes how we understand the knowledge economy's development because it stresses how significant the practices remaking the urban environment are for producing certain economic activities.

While reading the literature on cities and the knowledge economy, I was also struck that rent-seeking practices, as they did in the past, remain a prime mover of urbanization. In particular, I noticed how the fortunes of contemporary urban growth coalitions, like so many previous kinds of urban-based political alliances, depend on economic activities that secure a steady stream of revenues from (legally warranted) monopolies (Braudel 1982). Certainly others have observed how the "monopoly powers of place (expressed in place-specific process and product configurations)" are untradeable assets that significantly enhance a city's competitive advantage (Scott 1997, 325). More recently, there has been recognition that the growing uneven development among cities is strongly connected to the revenues that can be received by maintaining the high exchange value of technological and what I will call "knowledge" rents (Storper 2013). Yet as far as I know, there has not been a concerted effort to connect the significance

of revenues from rent seeking as a development driver to the fundamental role universities have attained in some urban economies. This emphasis changes our understanding of urban development because it links the growing significance of universities in national economies to the development of new forms of monopoly power.

Like so many people interested in how and why cities change, I was also driven by a perennial question in urban studies: who governs a city? While urban governance is an enormously broad topic, I was primarily concerned with urban planning and industrial policy. After several years of research, I began to see the relationship between the present efforts to rework Austin's spatial form and the specific qualities of the city's contemporary governing coalition. In particular, I began to think about how the City Council's recent policies and programs to refashion certain areas of the city, under the rubric of Smart Growth, were affecting communities whose priorities were not central to any dominant faction of the governing coalition. Later, examining the relationship between political coalitions and spatial arrangements over a much longer period of time, I discovered interesting parallels between the past and the present.

More precisely, however, I wanted to connect my research program about Austin to debates about urban governance that were unfolding in the emerging field of critical urban sustainability studies. Unlike other approaches to sustainability, this body of scholarship uses central concepts from urban political economy to understand the evolution and impacts of policies and programs designed to promote urban sustainability (Keil 2003; Krueger and Gibbs 2007; Heynen 2013). In terms of governance, this research has focused on how selectively incorporating urban sustainability principles, especially in terms of the natural environment, has become an essential part of contemporary urban entrepreneurialism and of the ways cities gain a competitive advantage in the interurban struggle for investment. Contemporary planning practices figure strongly in these efforts, and while they are able to meet some goals for better environmental stewardship, in most cases these urban planning efforts are unable to similarly improve social equity and may even make cities more unequal. Certainly one unique aspect of this literature is its emphasis on the significance of spatial relations, especially how the remaking of urban spaces is essential to fulfilling urban sustainability goals. However, the reorganization of a city's spatial form, especially in defined areas, can have a bigger role in urban governance than just being important for a city's competitive strategy. In Austin, the adoption of particular planning and design principles, and their implementation to refashion specific areas of a city, helped resolve tensions among the political factions competing for local government control. This outcome tells us that attention to spatial factors must remain at the heart of critical sustainability studies.

Shadows of a Sunbelt City is strongly rooted in a radical tradition of urban geography; therefore, it is worth mentioning that the three themes—the environment, racism, and the knowledge economy—used throughout the book are

not simple substitutes for the more standard categories of ecology, society, and economy. Instead, the term *environment*, in this book, refers to the entire urban environment, which contains both humans and nonhuman species. Furthermore, *racism* indicates how uneven relationships among different ethnic groups, especially those groups marked as nonwhite or partially white, have affected how the city developed. In particular, I stress how historical legacies and contemporary practices of prejudice and violence have influenced the vulnerability of different social groups to changes to the urban environment. Lastly, *knowledge economy* refers to more than private industrial service firms with high concentrations of human capital; it also includes the university's central function, particularly in its role as a land developer, in the region's economy. Baldly, this book's main argument is that the developing knowledge economy changed and interacted in complex ways with Austin's environment and its system of racial relations; the impact of these transformations has been strongly influenced by a historically varying, but still relatively stable, system of asymmetrical power relations that has engendered both the uneven development among neighborhoods and relative inequalities among peoples.

The evidence I use to make my arguments comes from several sources. Some primary material originates from numerous semistructured interviews I conducted with former and current mayors, City Council members, members of the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, real estate developers, administrators in several divisions of the local government, members of various environmental organizations, journalists, members of neighborhood associations, and political activists. Other primary sources such as government reports and institutional records can be found in the following archives and libraries: the Austin History Center; the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History; the Perry-Castañeda Library; the Tarleton Law Library; the Texas State Library and Archives; and the National Archives. Finally, I relied on newspaper and magazine articles, especially from the *Austin Business Journal*, the *Austin American-Statesman*, the *Austin Chronicle*, the *Daily Texan*, and the *Alcalde*.

Outline of the Book

This book is divided into two parts and six chapters. It is not written to reflect a straightforward historical narrative, although chapters 2 and 3 could be read in this way and chapters 4, 5, and 6 are all about contemporary development in Austin.

Part 1 primarily deals with the knowledge economy and more specifically the changing role of universities as drivers of urban and regional development.

Chapter 1 situates the development of the knowledge economy in Austin within the broader literature in urban political economy. On the one hand, the chapter explores how aspects of Austin's development can be accounted for by

two dominant schools of thought about what propels regional growth and uneven development. On the other hand, I argue that these schools of thought are inadequate, and I suggest an alternative account grounded in an understanding of spatiotemporal dynamics of the circulation of capital in and out of three different circuits. I draw special attention to what geographers call the secondary circuit of capital (i.e., investments into physical infrastructures) and also the tertiary circuit of capital (i.e., investments into social infrastructures). I use these concepts to understand why science and technology have a more central role in the economy (especially their part in research and development) and how this relates to changes in the economic value of university research and the growing financialization of R & D. I also note how two forms of rent, technological and knowledge rents, are increasingly important to urban growth, and I draw specific attention to the importance of these forms of rent seeking for universities in general and for the University of Texas at Austin in particular.

Chapter 2 is the first of two chapters to look at the role of the University of Texas as one of Austin's chief land developers. This chapter's focus is on an urban renewal initiative that was proposed and completed in central Austin in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The chapter highlights how the reasons behind this substantial land-acquisition program were different from those of previous territorial expansions, and how the 1960s effort was a central part of the university's transformation into a nationally ranked research university. I also describe how the City of Austin and its agent (the Austin Urban Renewal Authority), the Board of Regents of the University of Texas, and the federal government acted in concert because of a shared interest in redevelopment and promoting the university's expanding role in the local economy. However, there were social costs associated with this expansion that were, by and large, borne only by more modestly resourced African Americans in neighborhoods adjacent to the university.

The focus on the central role that the University of Texas played as a land developer in Austin continues into chapter 3, but the investigation moves to the 1980s. Unlike chapter 2, which emphasized the central role of federal policy, this chapter homes in on the relationship between the university and the government of the State of Texas. I focus on how the state government helped further transform the university's role, as its agent, into a land developer that could support the industrialization of central Texas. The university's actions, I believe, are unusual for the way the university used its unique bonding authority (granted under the provisions related to the Permanent University Fund) solely for the purpose of obtaining and developing an industrial site for two national corporate high-technology consortiums, the Microelectronics and Computer Corporation (MCC) and Sematech. Capturing this investment helped reposition Austin within the national, and later global, urban hierarchy and, I argue, led to the birth of a new configuration of actors in the local growth coalition.

Part 2 shifts to a discussion about contemporary planning practice in Austin, particularly Smart Growth, and its relationship to the city's urban governance.

Chapter 4 takes a critical look at Austin's turn toward urban sustainability and particularly how the sustainability focus relates to the city's strategy of revitalizing its existing urban core. This chapter engages directly with growth-machine theory but argues that the growth-machine thesis must be amended to include the concept of the "sustainability fix" and its emphasis on urban competitiveness and entrepreneurialism, as well as a concern with policing and programs of social control. I argue that the political compromise reached between the growth and antigrowth coalitions became workable because the latter were willing to accept redistributing the costs of growth away from "nonhuman species" and onto humans, particularly homeless people.

Chapter 5 builds on this thesis in the context of how the remaking of Austin's urban core is affecting the city's more modestly resourced communities of color. I concentrate on the tensions that existed in Austin between the "environmental" and "environmental justice" communities. I pose the question of how a selective environmental sustainability framework was effectively incorporated into the hegemonic vision of Austin's strategic growth plan. The answer, I believe, can be found in asking what counts as "the environment" for environmentalists. I show that the present political arrangements between environmentalists and the business community were born out of a compromise stipulating that environmentalists would support remaking Austin's downtown if the business community supported preserving an area in the suburbs for nonhuman species. The unstated assumption of both sides was that the transformation of the downtown physical and social environment (especially the displacement of communities of nonwhite minorities) was not an environmental problem because environmental concerns were limited to internalizing the effects of urbanization on nonhuman species.

Finally, in chapter 6, I continue to investigate urban planning and governance but looking at a much longer period of time. In particular, the chapter connects comprehensive planning efforts in Austin and a number of reforms of the formal systems of electing local government officials. As in previous chapters, I argue that studying this relationship reveals how much the business community's priorities influence the city's urban governance. I draw out parallels between the past and the present. One hundred years ago, official reforms of municipal representation clearly influenced the priorities established in the city's first master plan. I argue that this correspondence is maintained in future attempts to update Austin's comprehensive plan and enact further reforms in the city's system of political representation. In this chapter, I emphasize what can be gleaned by looking at the period from the 1970s to the first decade of the twenty-first century, when both efforts faltered.

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PART I

Forces of Growth

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CHAPTER 2

The Value of Knowledge

The Expansion of the University of Texas, Urban Renewal, and the Blackland

> The Main University's research program is broader in scope, and more sophisticated than that of any other school in the Southwest. Last year, it received some $6 million in government research grants. This fact has been a boon to industry in Austin. Modern industry wants to be close to high-rated experts with brilliant minds. Over the nation they are building their industries close to universities with highly educated personnel which they can use as consultants and researchists. With this industry, of course, comes greater economic prosperity to the entire community.
>
> **Austin Chamber of Commerce, "Great Academic Stature at UT Blueprinted for 1970"**

> The question cannot be if but how the University is going to expand.
>
> **Austin mayor Lester Palmer**

In 1963 Kerr Clark, a former president of the University of California system, argued that American universities were going through a "second great transformation" (Clark 2001, 65). While research universities could be found in the nineteenth century, since 1950 they dramatically expanded and fundamentally changed their "research role" to become much "larger, more complex, more segmented organizations" (Geiger 1993, viii). Collectively America's research universities became responsible for educating millions of undergraduate and graduate students every year, helping create one of the world's largest highly skilled labor forces (United States Department of Education 2012). Moreover, and perhaps as importantly, they became massive centers for research and development and took on a greatly enhanced role as sites for the production of new knowledge; they became, during this time, the "core of the country's science and technology system" (Atkinson and Blanpied 2008, 46).

By the 1960s it was also apparent that research universities were beginning to have an ever greater role in regional and local economic development. Clark suggested that "what railroads did for the second half of the last century and the automobile did for the first half of this century may be done for the second half

of this century by the knowledge industry: that is, to serve as the focal point for national growth. And the university is at the center of the knowledge process" (Clark 2001, 66).

Clark's prognostication turned out to be astute. Knowledge production did become much more central to economic growth, as information and knowledge-intensive activities increasingly formed the leading sectors of the economy because of their potential impact on industrial innovation, and indeed universities found themselves in a new, elevated role (Storper and Scott 2009). University administrators began to encourage, or were persuaded to allow, university professors, particularly in material and natural sciences, to develop partnerships with local firms or establish businesses (Burger 1979; Geiger 1993, 206–309). While these partnerships often happened in research parks developed by universities, it was not uncommon for faculty to become consultants to private industry or to form their own companies (Feldman and Desrochers 2003, 16–20; Luger and Goldstein 1991, 76–154; Lawton-Smith 2006, 128–129). In some cities, most notably Boston and Palo Alto, strong university-industry relations were built, spawning further industrial development either by encouraging new firms to locate to the area or by supporting technological transfer from the university to private firms (Etzkowitz and Dzisah 2008). Moreover, industries, particularly those that were developing in high technology, benefited from the federal defense spending being funneled through universities. It is not a coincidence that the regions of the United States that were the largest recipients of defense dollars, the West and the South (what Ann Markusen called the Gunbelt), were also the regions that experienced the most rapid growth in high-technology sectors (O'Mara 2005; Markusen 1991; Saxenian 1996).

Since the late 1960s, Austin, Texas, has benefited greatly from the presence of the flagship campus of the University of Texas, which has played a major role, directly and indirectly, in supporting the city's development into a high-technology center (Oden 1997; Gibson and Smilor 1991). UT assisted in this development in several ways before 1975. First, Tracor, a defense-related company and the first major local high-technology firm, was set up by UT professors and recruited its workforce and management from the university (Busch 2013). The Balcones Research Center, UT's first research park, was a significant recipient of federal defense dollars for research and was important in supporting a pool of skilled laborers that proved useful in courting companies to locate the first branch plants in the city beginning in the late 1960s (Busch 2011, 141–158). Finally, many UT faculty members, particularly from the faculty of engineering, became consultants for companies with branch offices in the city or in some cases even established their own firms in Austin (Dugger 1974, 159–168).

Yet the significance of the federal government's urban policy regarding UT's development as a major research university and center for science and engineering is hardly mentioned in the scholarly literature on the city's development. Certainly, the federal government, as it was for all research universities in

the United States, was the central source for research funding at UT, especially defense-related research. But more importantly, what is missing from the scholarship is that for UT to become a more robust research university in the 1960s, like many other universities throughout the country in denser urban areas, federal urban policy was required to assist in its land-acquisition program. Today, more and more scholars are focusing on the "spatial consequence of growth for higher education," especially how the federal government's funding for land development facilitated the significant spatial expansion of research universities in the 1960s (Winling 2010, 2). What can be seen in UT's development into a much larger, more complex research university in the 1960s and 1970s is how much it was connected to both increases in federal research funds and the federal urban policy that helped make possible the expansion of the main campus.

In this case study of the University of Texas at Austin, I show how the motivations behind a substantial land-acquisition program undertaken in the 1960s were different from those of previous territorial expansions and were a central part of the university's transforming role as a research university. I also describe how the alliance among national and local actors reshaped urban policy and influenced the production of certain economic practices and the land-use possibilities of the university. Implemented in a particular way by the City of Austin and its agent the Austin Urban Renewal Authority, supported by the state legislature, and adopted by the Board of Regents of UT, federal urban renewal policy was especially enabling because it helped establish the legal framework for taking land and deferred the financial and social costs associated with the university's expansion. However, it is important to point out that the social costs of the expansion of the main campus were distributed unevenly in space and disproportionately borne by certain groups of people, namely more modestly resourced communities of Hispanics, Caucasians, and particularly African Americans.

The university's capacity to remake Austin's urban space, and the subsequent impact on the regional economy, draws attention back to the fundamental role that federal urban policy had in the production of the knowledge economy. For decades the scholarship on Austin has either focused on the local growth coalition or made too much of the university's positive "spillover" in developing the region. Like other more contemporary scholarship, I argue for a new avenue of academic inquiry that sees UT as having a central role in the economic development of Austin into a high-technology region because of its role as a land developer, a role that was assisted by federal legislation.

Federal Urban Policy and the Changing Mission of the Research University

Beginning in the 1950s, after the passage of the Housing Act in 1949, the federal government began to take on a much more active role in urban policy. In par-

ticular, the term "urban renewal" emerged to refer to the federal program that provided funds to municipalities mainly for slum clearance made possible by Title 1 of the 1949 act. Under its new authority, the federal government could provide funds to a local government (or its agent, a development authority) for the costs of purchasing existing homes or parcels of land in an area and razing, rebuilding, and/or rehabilitating them. The law also authorized federal authorities to provide financial assistance to relocate or rehouse residents in the affected communities. Expanded several times over more than a decade, the program grew in scope and increasingly allowed for federal funds to be used for an ever greater number of programs, particularly commercial developments, while it decreased its involvement in housing projects (Teaford 2000).

Urban renewal reshaped the landscape of cities, in particular their racial geographies. Established because of the demands made from various constituencies to stop the decline of older neighborhoods in cities (particularly near their central business districts), urban renewal efforts involving land clearance and redevelopment disproportionately affected urban neighborhoods with the highest concentrations of African Americans. While federal policy was said to be racially neutral, efforts by local governments were so brazenly racialized that in a 1967 interview, James Baldwin, the famed African American novelist, said, "Urban renewal . . . means moving the Negroes out. It means Negro removal; that is what it means. The federal government is an accomplice to this fact" (Baldwin 1963). In fact, for about three decades of the twentieth century one can find many cases where local governments, under the aegis of federal policy, claimed they were improving their cities by clearing blighted neighborhoods and then building new, often public, housing for the affected communities. In reality, however, African Americans were dispossessed of their property; their communities were torn apart, and in many cases the residents were just moved from one degraded neighborhood to another (Teaford 2000).

One thing that became more apparent over time was that when land clearing took place, especially in areas where a commercial redevelopment would be desirable near city centers, urban renewal "was not an anti-poverty program [but] an effort to inject economic vitality into central cities" (O'Mara 2005, 76). Moreover, local progrowth urban coalitions emerged that used this federal policy to transform cities, particularly their older central business districts, into "postindustrial administrative centers" (Mollenkopf 1983, 140). So while the federal government did collaborate in these land clearances, which provided local economies with new rounds of profitable investment in urban centers, their intervention was more than just an urban clearance program: the government's urban policy, in many cases, was an economic policy because it supported the reorganization of urban space to facilitate the development of particular kinds of economic practices, which would now be classified as the "postindustrial knowledge economy."

As a result of lobbying efforts, various universities' expansion plans became conjoined with federal urban renewal policy under "Section 112" in the amended 1959 Housing Act and became central to the remaking of cities for the "new post-industrial age" (O'Mara 2005, 79; Winling 2011). For example, William Slayton, then commissioner of the federal urban renewal administration, wrote in a 1963 report:

> For the past several years there has been a remarkable growth in the interest and participation of universities in urban renewal. Part of this interest is an outgrowth of the great pressure on universities to expand their physical facilities to meet rising enrollments. During the past 30 years enrollments in colleges and universities have more than tripled, and are expected to double or triple again during the next 20 years. The task of preparing for this growth is overwhelming, and must fall largely upon existing institutions. But new facilities cannot be created unless there is land available, and most of our urban universities are landlocked. While they have been making major efforts to acquire land on the open market, this has proven very difficult. The universities have come to realize that urban renewal can assemble land needed for expansion, when the land is blighted. Accordingly they have become active redevelopers. . . . The university interest in urban renewal is matched by that of municipal officials who understand the important role that universities play in the economic and cultural life of the community. The universities make a significant contribution to the local economy with their large payrolls and the substantial expenditures by their students. But even beyond these direct expenditures, the presence of a university and its technological and research resources serves as a major factor in attracting industry to the community. The Congress recognized the importance of the university-municipality relationship and the role urban renewal could play in enhancing this relationship when it added section 112 to title I in the Housing Act of 1959. Section 112 offers two advantages to renewal projects which provide space for university expansion or create a more compatible environment for university functions: (1) Such projects are exempt from the residential requirements of title I and (2) certain expenditures by the university in acquiring land near urban renewal projects may be credited toward the local share of carrying out the project. (United States Congress 1964, 429–430)

Under these federal laws, institutions of higher learning across the country expanded their campuses with federal assistance (Parsons and Davis 1971). Moreover, the provisions in Section 112 made incorporating universities into urban-renewal projects more attractive because of the two-to-one credit program now offered. According to Winling, "University contributions near to and consistent with an approved urban renewal plan would trigger a two-to-one federal match, even for acquisition or demolition expenses up to five years before the enactment of the renewal plan. Federal funds in excess of the cost of the project could become credits transferable to urban renewal projects anywhere in the

city" (Winling 2011, 70). While some accounts of university expansion chalked up these efforts, perhaps in part correctly, to the imperial aspirations of administrators thirsty for more land and students (that is, having bigger campuses), it is important to stress, as the quote from Slayton reflects, to what extent the research demands of universities and their growing economic value cannot be divorced from the spatial policies that supported both.

Furthermore, the federal government's expanded role, as a primary financial supporter of university research, is part and parcel of university land expansion plans. In 1953 the federal government's contribution to funds available for research at universities was about 55 percent; by 1970 this had risen to almost 70 percent. Most of these funds went to research and development with military-related purposes, though some non-military-related research, especially in the natural sciences, education, and health, also benefited (Graham and Diamond 1997, 47–48). Moreover, as Geiger has shown, the federal government's share of research funds to the top twenty-four research universities (the universities that received the bulk of the funds for research until 1960) decreased as the federal government funded an ever broader number of universities. As a consequence of these new opportunities for funds, an intense interuniversity competition ensued as more and more universities saw a chance to emulate "more prestigious models" and rise in the academic hierarchy (Geiger 1993, 203–204). Position in the hierarchy was essential because it, along with political connections, ensured the ability to garner more and more federal funds (O'Mara 2005, 52–55). One way to improve your status was to establish well-funded graduate programs. Another way was to improve the quality of the faculty by hiring more researchers who were well regarded in their respective fields. Both of these tactics could be accomplished only by making more money available for research, but they also required spending more money on facilities such as labs, buildings, and offices.

Local progrowth coalitions sought to capitalize on the "need" for universities to expand, which was created by this new federal role in research, and remake their cities into what O'Mara has cogently called "cities of knowledge." A new kind of urban space could be produced, one that was dominated and controlled by a university, and whose primary purpose was the production of knowledge. Increasingly, therefore, universities saw themselves as partners with local growth coalitions in land-development programs and as potential partners with industry in promoting technological innovation and regional growth. Moreover, universities began to take on a new role as urban developers.

However, as universities increasingly became involved in land development, they more and more became the target of animosity from their surrounding communities. For instance, Stanford, in its quest to propel the development of technology in Silicon Valley, encountered substantial opposition from local environmentalists (O'Mara 2005, 132–139). In existing urbanized areas, such as

Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit, Baltimore, Newark, and Chicago, university expansion efforts, supported by federal and state urban-renewal laws, met fierce resistance because these plans often required the removal of people with more modest resources, primarily African Americans, from their neighborhoods (Hirsch 1998; Ernst et al. 1974; Winling 2011; Parsons and Davis 1971; Souther 2011). Such a reappraisal of university expansions, and their devastating consequences for some communities, is increasingly forcing reconsideration of the sometimes-Pollyannaish account of postwar high-technology growth in cities, an account that seems particularly strong in Austin.

The Making of the University of Texas and the 1921 Proposal to Move the Main Campus

The University of Texas system is a quasi-state institution. Since 1881, an independent Board of Regents, appointed solely by the governor, has governed the system. Originally, the UT system consisted of only the main campus in Austin and the medical school in Galveston, but it now encompasses nine academic campuses and six medical or science schools across the state. The system's chancellor, vice-chancellors, and all the university and school presidents that are appointed serve at the pleasure of the regents (Dugger 1974, xvii). However, the university is considered an appendage of the state, as is its property. Therefore, although the university earns huge sums of money from mineral royalties, cattle-grazing rents, and tuition, it does not pay federal income taxes, nor does it pay land taxes to any of the municipalities where it administers a campus. Moreover, as a state institution the university was always able to take land at a fair market price with authorization by the State Legislature, but since 1965 the power of eminent domain—the right of the government or its agent to take private property for public use at a just compensation—has been granted directly to the regents.

One of the most peculiar aspects of UT is that it is supported by a state-created sovereign fund known as the Permanent University Fund (PUF). This financing structure has important consequences for the university's development. Like other universities, it receives operating revenues from tuition, grants, donations, and interest or dividends from its endowment. Moreover, as is typical for public universities, some of these funds come directly from the state government's coffers; presently, that contribution makes up about 15 percent of the university's operating budget. However, since 1876, UT has been financed largely by income derived from its public endowment. The PUF's principal asset is a huge portion of land in the state—over 2 million acres, nearly all in western Texas—granted in several legislative appropriations in the nineteenth century (Erwin 1973). The 1876 statutes that created the PUF stipulated that the revenues that come from

control over this land, taken from either mineral (subsurface) royalties or the land's disposal, would form the endowment's principal, and these revenues had to be reinvested into the PUF. In contrast, revenue derived from the "surface," primarily grazing leases, land rents, or dividends paid from investments made from the PUF such as interest-bearing bonds (later amended to include dividends from all financial securities) could be used only for constructing buildings (personnel were primarily paid by state legislative appropriation or tuition) (Cook 1997; Prindle 1982, 278; Matthews 2007, 22–24).

Moreover, UT is one of the largest public universities not created by a federal land grant. In 1876, when the State Legislature established the PUF, it also mandated that land for the first state university "be located [somewhere in the state] by a vote of the people of this State" (State of Texas 1876). Although UT had been given a large land grant for its endowment (and later its holdings were dramatically expanded by further legislative action), it took several more years for construction in Austin to begin, and it was only in 1884 that the first building was completed (Long 1964). In part, the delay was due to the demand for a vote to determine where the campus should be placed. After a competition among several cities throughout Texas, it was decided in a state referendum in 1881 that the main campus of the university system should be built in the newly formed Texas capital in Austin and that a medical school should be constructed in Galveston. That same year the governor signed an act that both set aside forty acres in Austin for the campus and vested the regents with control over the university.

However, quickly it became apparent the available funds created by the PUF were inadequate to meet the demands of expanding or maintaining the university's physical plant. Nearly all the land the legislature had granted into the PUF was considered not very valuable. It was not particularly good for farming or grazing, and little profitable mining had been discovered. Plus, because it was far from large urban settlements that may have inflated the value of its real estate holdings, the land had a minimal resale price. To make matters worse for the university, the legislature in 1876 had also prohibited the use of any state funds for the construction of new buildings. "As a consequence," Prindle writes, "for decades most of the buildings on the campus in Austin were miserable shacks" (Prindle 1982, 278).

Despite the university's paltry conditions and resources, enrollment grew rapidly, and by 1910, only about ten years after the first main building had finally been completed, the spatial limitations of the campus became apparent. The area around the main campus in Austin had been encircled by residential neighborhoods, but as the student population had grown, it was evident that additional facilities needed to be built and existing ones to be upgraded (Brown 1984; Erwin 1973; Holland 2006, 91). After years of internal deliberations, the regents voted in 1921 to move the entire campus to a five-hundred-acre plot in

another, less centrally located, section of Austin—a plot donated to UT in 1910 out of concern that the university would not be able to expand at its original location (Long 1964). In their request to the governor and legislature, the regents noted that enrollment had increased more than 100 percent since 1914—almost 20 percent a year—and that there was already insufficient space for boarding and educating these students. Complaining that the buildings were "inadequate, outworn, and dangerous" because many were old, wooden, and not fireproof, the regents argued there was no option but to raze them and sell the land (Long 1964, 91). Houses occupied almost all the land around the university that, the regents claimed, could be legally acquired but could not be taken without the "costs of the bitterness" to the surrounding community, "which such a course must inevitably produce" (Long 1964, 92). Lastly, the regents argued that an expansion at the present location could happen only at "prohibitive" financial cost (Long 1964, 92). What the regents did not say is also significant: nowhere in their statement to the governor is there a mention of the needs of professors, the university's research profile, or the university's scholastic ranking.

Nevertheless, in the end, the main campus of the university did not move from its original location. After fierce opposition from the Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, and powerful former alumni, the state legislature responded by appropriating over $1 million to buy up 135 acres of land adjacent to the university, and the original 40 acres expanded to 175 (Austin American-Statesman 1956; Brown 1984, 31; Long 1964). What proved to be perhaps more important for the upgrading and expansion of the physical plant was the discovery in 1923 of a huge reserve of oil under the lands owned by the university (Vinson 1940). In a mere three years, from 1923 to 1925, the oil royalties in the PUF went from about $16,000 to almost $4 million (Prindle 1982, 286). Needless to say, the size of the endowment greatly expanded, but because oil is "subterranean" it was considered part of the principal of the endowment. Thus, the massive amount of revenue flowing into the fund could only be reinvested into the PUF. Although the net income increased dramatically from interest on investments made with this new revenue, as did the money available for expanding or improving the university's physical infrastructure, these funds were still insufficient to meet the ever growing demands placed on the university. In part to alleviate this pressure, in 1928 the legislature began to allow the university to issue bonds against a portion of the endowment's principal to finance new construction for permanent improvements. (This authority has been expanded dramatically over the years, with significant implications for the university's ability to raise funds for new land development; see chapter 3.) With its new bonding authority and newly acquired land, one of the largest expansions in the university's history was undertaken on the main campus in Austin from 1922 to 1942 (Cook 1997, 20; Speck 2006).

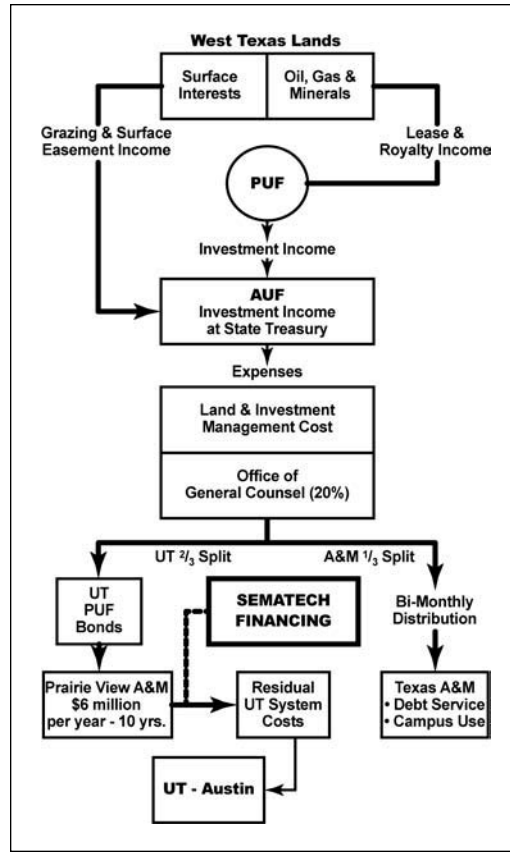


FIGURE 1.
Diagram of the Permanent University Fund. Based on image found in Board of Regents Real Estate Records, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, the University of Texas at Austin.

The Committee of 75 and the Birth of a New University Model

In 1957, on UT's seventy-fifth anniversary, the regents appointed some of Texas's most powerful elites to "undertake a 'realistic and sober reappraisal' of the University of Texas as it enters the final quarter of its first century" (University of Texas System Committee of 75 1958, Preamble). After a series of surveys and interviews, the Committee of 75, as it was known, issued a report that outlined areas where the university should be improved. The state constitutional statute that had created UT as an institution for "public education" demanded that the university be "of first class," but according to the committee, this goal had not been achieved (8). While the undergraduate and graduate programs were given a "satisfactory ranking," the university research program was deemed "less than satisfactory." The problem was that "the research program has not attracted

many great scholars . . . and little of the work [had] won national recognition" (9). The committee, therefore, recommended that the "most dramatic single change . . . during the next 25 years should occur in the character and quality of its achievements in the field of research" (15). In order to achieve this goal, the university would have to offer more competitive salaries and a better working environment, which included increasing the research facilities available to faculty (17–18).

One of the central problems in improving the work environment, and therefore the rank of the university, was the condition of buildings and other research facilities (University of Texas System Committee of 75 1958, 20). Physical plant improvements, less hindered by financial constraints than before, were still hindered by spatial constraints. The university was located in the middle of Austin, in a well-built-up area, and there was no readily available land around it for new development. But making better research facilities required, in part, expanding the land occupied by the university. The report read as follows: "The Main University should seek Legislative permission to purchase additional land contiguous to The Main University campus to permit expansion of its facilities in pace with growing needs. It is clear that a major expansion of The Main University will be imperative over the next 25 years, and many difficult and costly problems can be avoided if careful thought is given to future requirements and if steps to acquire land are taken in the proper time" (21).

Significantly, while nearly all of the report from the Committee of 75 was adopted verbatim in the official Board of Regents public response, the above statement was omitted (University of Texas Board of Regents 1960e). However, I suggest that this omission was due not to the regents' lack of endorsement for this idea but instead to the public anger it may have caused had it been officially sanctioned.

Furthermore, I argue, the subsequent expansion plans of the main campus of UT at Austin over the next forty years should be seen in light of the recommendations of the Committee of 75. To support my contention, one need only turn to what the administrators at UT actually did. Approximately two years after the committee made its recommendations, the university undertook a confidential audit to figure out how to implement these recommendations into a master plan. The series of memos drafted for the administration regarding changes to the physical plant addressed student enrollment, faculty needs, sports facilities, classrooms, administrative offices, and so on. The report was clear that "space-demand is somewhat separate from gross enrollment" (University of Texas Board of Regents 1960a, 12). It stressed that "faculty office needs are growing much faster than enrollment" and that a "drastic action to stop enrollment increase could reduce building needs 1961–70 by $8 to $10 million at the outside; quickly enacted freshman admission restrictions, imposed gradually, could result in $4 million less in building" (12). Undergraduate enrollment, in other

words, could be limited for the purpose of saving money for faculty research, which was the "valuable means for pursuing eminence" (University of Texas Board of Regents 1960c, 36).

In memo 3, titled "The Problem of Main University Space and Its Utilization," the auditors explored how campus land was being used. Here, recommendations were made based on a "space audit," which took a map of the campus and drew red lines around an area that was estimated to be the largest zone in which a student could walk to class in ten minutes. The findings of this space audit suggested that peripheral (e.g., sports fields) or support (e.g., physical plant) services should be moved out of this inner campus area in order to make room for student and faculty services. However, it did not suggest where to relocate these services, nor does the report seem to endorse acquiring new land near the university: "Several apparently desirable land acquisitions contiguous to the Main Campus have been mentioned. In one sense, it appears rather wasteful to be purchasing land when we have the large acreages of Brackenridge and Balcones [Research Facility]. Limited utility of these areas is increasingly apparent, however" (University of Texas Board of Regents 1960b, 29).

So while the auditors still suggested that auxiliary and support facilities could be located elsewhere on land the university already owned, they recognized the problem associated with their spatial division from the main campus. However, when they discussed the possibility of acquiring more land east of Red River Street, they offered several caveats about why this would not be a good idea.

> Although several suggestions have been made for acquisitions of tracts East of Red River, some of which are relatively unimproved, no very pressing need can be identified. In the far-distant future the academic campus could extend along a shuttle-bus route all the way to East Avenue, but this seems a rather remote possibility. Any storage facilities or shops located East of Red River could be put at Balcones with slight additions to operating cost. Football fans would welcome parking lots in this area, but wouldn't pay enough to amortize grading and topping, probably. No one who has studied the use of satellite parking for students at these distances is very sanguine about its acceptability—especially if a fee has to be charged for its use. (University of Texas Board of Regents 1960b, 29)

In other words, the auditors acknowledged that it was be possible for the university to expand eastward but noted that it was not feasible to move academic facilities (the main source of the university's problems) that far to the east. Moreover, they suggested that even relocating support services to an acquired area to the east was not a good idea because while they would be closer to the campus, these services could just as easily and at minimal extra costs be moved further offsite to land already owned by the university. Lastly, parking, a major reason given for the needed expansion, was a notable concern, but it too would not be cost-effective because it would not pay for itself.

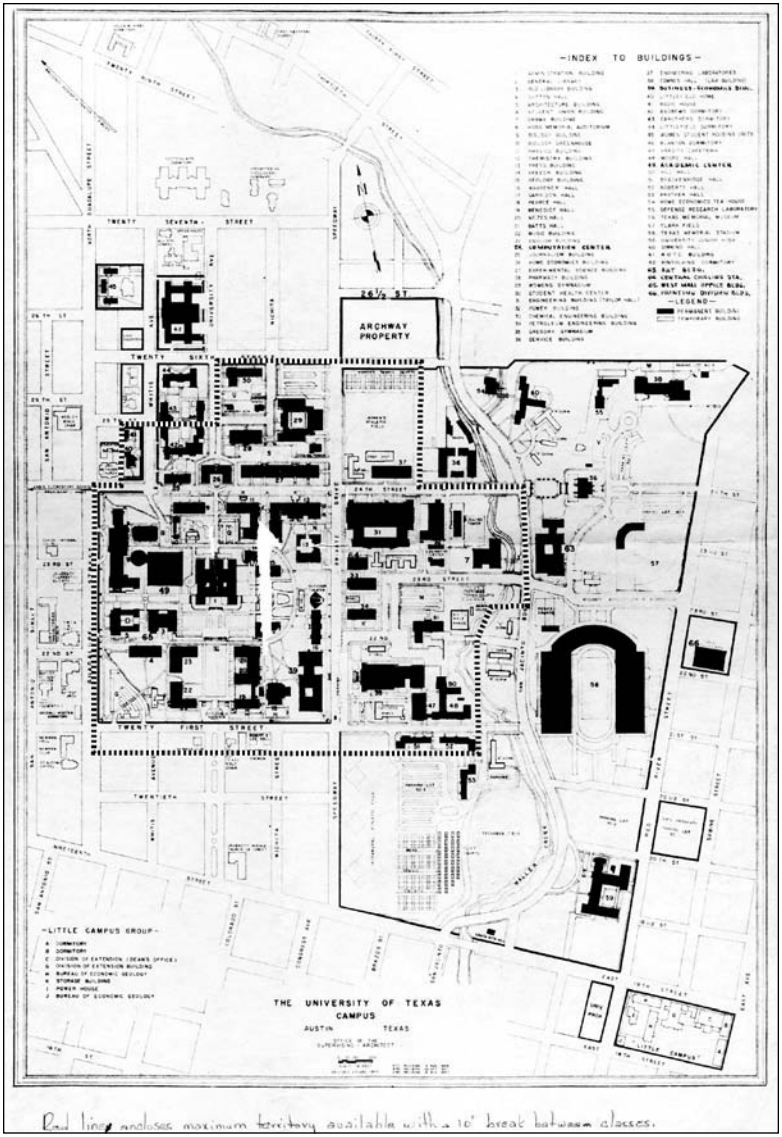


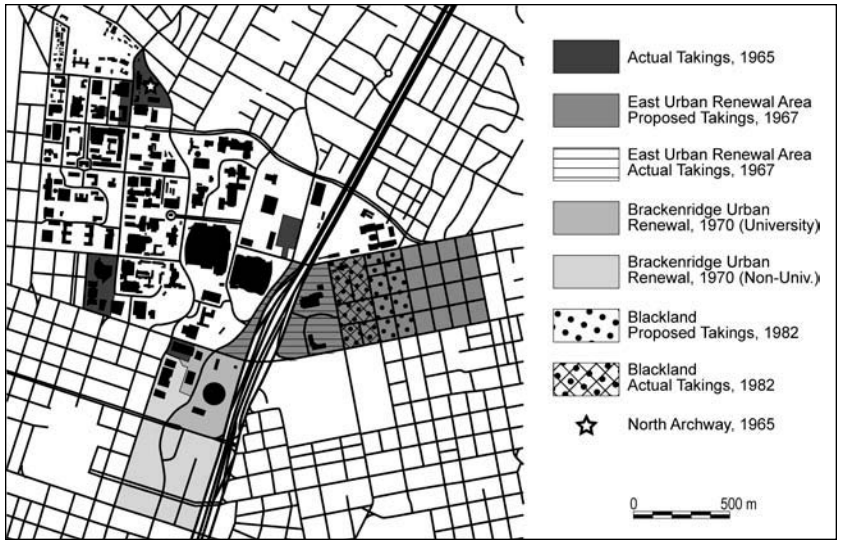
FIGURE 2. The Space-Auditor's Map of UT Austin's Main Campus, 1960. Board of Regents Real Estate Records, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, the University of Texas at Austin.

The auditors were frank about what was driving the spatial shortage, but unlike the public statement mentioned earlier concerning the 1921 expansion, the auditors' statement showed a striking disregard for the effects of any land acquisition program on the surrounding community. There was no mention of community concerns, the possibility that expansion might fuel animosity toward the university, or the noneconomic value of community in the surrounding area. What would it mean to raze homes, relocate businesses, and disrupt several neighborhoods in order to create parking lots to service fans for football games? The auditors' focus was clearly on how to achieve the maximum utility of space at the lowest financial cost in order to maximize possible productive returns, particularly for faculty research, on the investment from the university.

Expanding Southeast and East but Not North or West

Designed to meet the needs for "10 years of growth," the official master plan announced in 1960 "was intended to boost the University of Texas into the ranks of the top state universities in the nation" (University of Texas Board of Regents 1960d). To fulfill this goal the university had to expand its territory, and to facilitate this process the legislature granted the regents the power of eminent domain in the spring of 1965 (Texas State Legislature 1965). Prior to this power being granted, the regents had to ask the legislature for approval before taking individual properties; now they could act as agents of the state without prior legislative authorization (Texas State Legislature 1965; Waldrep 1965). In the winter of 1965, the administration, exercising its newly granted authority, began taking small portions of land in all directions around the main campus except to the west (Daily Texan 1965b; Maddigan 1965). Then vice-chancellor Norman Hackerman said, "it is 'proper-sighted' to gain space now [1965] for 1975. The University of Texas is one of the staging areas for the worldwide explosions of knowledge. . . . [T]he space needed by the University should be obtained before prices become completely prohibitive" (Brewer 1965). While not all landowners resisted, some were unhappy to dispose of their land. An organization called the University Area Land Owners Association formed to protest the appraisal values given for land by consultants hired by UT. After repeatedly petitioning the regents, the legislature, and the courts, these landowners were able to receive greater compensation for their land than they were originally offered (Daily Texan 1965a). While this action was unable to stop the university's land acquisitions, it made the process much more difficult and much more expensive for the university than was anticipated (University of Texas Board of Regents n.d.).

While the main campus had expanded since its founding in 1876, the proposed expansion under the master plan in the 1960s was different. Although not as dramatic as the 1921 proposal to move the entire campus, the master plan had the potential to change the layout of the campus. The *Alcalde*, the alumni


Actual Takings, 1965
East Urban Renewal Area Proposed Takings, 1967
East Urban Renewal Area Actual Takings, 1967
Brackenridge Urban Renewal, 1970 (University)
Brackenridge Urban Renewal, 1970 (Non-Univ.)
Blackland Proposed Takings, 1982
Blackland Actual Takings, 1982
North Archway, 1965
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500 m

FIGURE 3. UT Austin Land Takings, 1963–1988.

newsletter, featured a whimsical headline that alluded to the removal of students from the university: "Are we going next?" In the 1965 article the major concern was the rumors that the administration, in order to comply with the recommendations of the "space auditors," discussed moving the football stadium, which was located in the center of campus. Very controversial to many alumni, this plan was ultimately abandoned (University of Texas Board of Regents 1965b, 129–130). More telling, however, was the subtitle of the *Alcalde* article, "The Expanding Boundaries of the Forty Acres move North, South, West, and mostly East" (Brewer 1965). But how far the university would try to extend eastward the reporter would not have known.

In 1966, despite the recommendations from their own internal "space-audit," the regents announced that the main campus would undergo a massive eastward expansion on a scale well beyond what anybody could have imagined. Suggesting that it was "impossible to expand in any direction without inconveniencing a considerable number of people," William Heath, chairman of the Board of Regents, argued, "It is completely impractical for reasons we have given many times for the University campus to substantially expand except east" (Heath 1966). Complaints about future spatial limitations and concerns about the need to push the university eastward seemed to have been widely circulated by members of the university community as far back as 1959. "A problem that is not so worrisome is the matter of 'where do we grow' geographically," Jo Eickmann at the *Daily Texan* wrote in a manner reminiscent of the geographer Friedrich Raztel; "The University's room to breathe in lies principally to the east of campus" (Eickmann 1959). Moreover, the necessity of taking a large amount of land

to the east may have become more pressing in the preceding years. An appraiser UT hired to assess property values around the university had noted, "As available land has been absorbed on the west side and the relocation and expansion of the law school, new interest and development has begun to occur east of Red River and north of East 19th street" (University of Texas Board of Regents 1965a).

The extent of the announced eastward expansion in 1966 was stunning. It was going to be the largest single land expansion since the university's inception. Reflected in the headline of a local paper—"UT to Knife Deep into East Austin"—the proposal included the seizure of over 140 acres to the east of the university, including over four hundred parcels and displacing approximately three hundred homeowners and hundreds of renters (Castlebury 1966; City of Austin 1966; Ransom 1966). The regents recognized privately that a neighborhood would be razed and acquired land would be used to relocate the intramural fields, tennis courts, the baseball field, and other support services, which included parking lots, but would not state this publicly. Furthermore, the confidential minutes of the regents' meeting show that the land acquisition was primarily for future use (University of Texas Board of Regents 1966b).

Publicly, the rationale for such a large land acquisition was the fear that the university would have to limit student enrollment; after all, enrollment at the main campus had grown from about 18,000 in 1950 to about 25,000 in 1965, and it was projected to rise another 10,000 in just ten years, which it did (City of Austin 1965, 19–20, 1974, 14–15). "If we are not able to acquire additional usable land then we'll have to consider limiting our enrollment," threatened Frank Erwin, chairman of the Board of Regents. "If we limit enrollment, instead of the Main University being the principal university in the state, we'll find others being the largest and the principal schools" (Castlebury 1966). Austin mayor Lester Palmer echoed a similar theme: "A few people may be inconvenienced but on the other hand many hundreds of thousands of young students may not be afforded an opportunity to attend the university" (City of Austin 1966). Yet the position taken by Erwin and Palmer seems less than candid. Certainly the expansion plans took into account concerns about enrollment, but internal memos make clear that faculty research needs, not enrollment, primarily drove the enlargement policies. However, such a justification, stated publicly, may not have been as persuasive because it would have been inconsistent with the widely held belief that educating students should be a public university's primary mission (Dugger 1974).

The Blackland or the Winn Tract?

The question looming in the background, meanwhile, was why an eastward expansion, an expansion that would inconvenience a considerable number of people, seemed more logical than an expansion in any other direction. To be sure,

the decision was driven by financial costs; the properties east of the main campus were less expensive and could be acquired at a "cheaper" price. Monetary value, however, masked the social price UT could not afford to pay. While the administration's territorial aspirations may not have had limits, there were social limits that shaded the possible geographical confines of the planned expansion. The proposed land seizure was going to destroy only a neighborhood that was more modestly resourced, and nearly all of the people that were going to be affected were nonwhite minorities, particularly African Americans. Operating under what Abrams called the racist theory of value, UT administrators and city officials worked with the assumption that African American neighborhoods, households, and bodies were simply less valuable and desirable than those of whites. Since the university was going to change the "color" and character of the neighborhood by removing its inhabitants, it was also going to improve its value (Abrams 1955, 157–158). Yes, the land was less expensive, but this was the result of decades of antiblack racism in Austin. Focusing on only the financial price obscured the social relations (unequal treatment of whites over blacks) that had generated and continued to reproduce the devaluing of the area and its peoples.

From the outset, the administration claimed that the proposed taking of land was both necessary and desirable. It was necessary for the university not to limit enrollment and to maintain its position as the premier place for higher education in Texas. Land taking was desirable because it would improve UT's national academic profile and boost the long-term economic fortunes of Austin. Moreover, local officials were strongly in favor of the university's taking the land to the east because it would remove a "poorer," mostly "blighted," neighborhood.

The area to the east, locally known as the "Blackland," had originally been called the "Blacklands" by Swedish farmers who had coveted the area in the nineteenth century for its rich and dark "Blacklands" soil. (The Blackland Belt or Prairie is an ecological subregion in eastern Texas, famous for its agricultural production, especially cotton [Foley 1997, 30–32; Prout 2012, 141–143].) As Austin's population grew, the farms just east of the capitol were subdivided into single-family homes, and by the 1950s the area had become occupied primarily by African Americans. By 1960, the "s" had been removed from the colloquial use of the name, making it the "Blackland," which was sometimes referred to pejoratively as "niggerland" (McCarver 1995, 21).

Prior to the 1930s, African Americans had been located throughout the city in small numbers, but their largest grouping was in an area east of downtown (Tretter 2013). Several factors, discussed in more detail in chapter 6, pushed African Americans to concentrate in neighborhoods in the eastern part of the city, but two issues should be mentioned now. First, the 1928 master plan adopted by the city recommended that all social services such as education and hospitalization be made available to blacks only in the eastern part of the city. Second, racially restrictive covenants, which forbade nonwhites from access to housing, proliferated in Austin's newer western and northern neighborhoods. Over

time, the Blacklands and other older neighborhoods, which were located close to other neighborhoods with high concentrations of African Americans and which also lacked restrictive covenants, became the areas of immigration for nonwhites from other areas in the city and elsewhere. As whites moved out or died, the demography of the area gradually changed from being a working-class white, primarily Swedish neighborhood to one dominated by African Americans. As it became an African American neighborhood, the area began to suffer from chronic problems, such as lack of investment and disenfranchisement caused by racial discrimination, that produced declining social and housing conditions.

The legacies and realities of antiblack racism that supported UT's expansion plans are perhaps most clearly seen in how representatives from the university and the city government referred to the area that was going to be seized. Despite the wide acceptance of the neighborhood's name as the Blackland, UT and the City of Austin officials referred to the project area as the Winn Tract (named after the elementary school located in the area), the University East Project, or the Eastern Renewal Area. UT had a poor track record when it came to the treatment of African Americans, and Goldstone contends that during this period regents, sensitive to charges of racism, often tried to distance the university "from the more blatant forms of racial segregation" (Goldstone 2006, ix). Since its founding in the 1880s the university had admitted only whites. In 1950 UT was forced by the Supreme Court to integrate its professional and graduate schools, and while African Americans were able to enter its undergraduate program in the 1960s, its dorms and sports teams remained almost completely segregated until the 1970s. During the 1950s and early 1960s, desegregation protests were common at the university, and the main campus was an important staging ground for antiracist student activists throughout Texas; later, around the time of expansion, UT was "the largest center of new left activism in America" (Kuhlman 1995; Rossinow 1998, 9). Perhaps the regents were fearful of referring to the neighborhood as the Blackland because doing so risked unmasking the social processes that allowed for the entire eastward expansion and enlivening these activists against their proposal.

The Racial Effects of Urban Renewal: The Brackenridge and Eastern Renewal Areas

The regents had not come up with the idea of taking such a large section of the city. The plan, as confidential and public documents show, was presented to the administration by the officials at the Austin Urban Renewal Agency (AURA), a private, nonprofit, quasi-governmental organization established in 1959 by the Austin City Council for slum clearance and blighted-neighborhood rehabilita-

tion. Made up of all the City Council members plus some additional planners and local stakeholders, the AURA had been vested by the City of Austin as a legally separate nonmunicipal entity with the powers of eminent domain mandated to promote urban renewal, which often meant razing "deteriorated neighborhoods" and selling the land back to private or nonprivate actors for redevelopment (Austin Urban Renewal Agency 1972, 2). Backed by the federal Housing Act and supportive state legislation, the City of Austin, like countless other municipal authorities, was able to give these private entities the legal authority to forcibly buy real property for the purpose of removal or rehabilitation. Once an urban-renewal agency decided that a selected area of a city should have the legal designation "slum," that area could be seized and slated for land clearance, and the federal government would pay for part of the land seizure and the rehousing of the displaced homeowners and renters. The appropriated land would then be sold back to other developers for "higher and better" uses.

Before AURA was formed, the City of Austin, in 1954, created an exploratory committee called the Greater East Austin Development Committee (a committee with almost no representatives from East Austin) to "study the needs of the East Austin Community," and "it was through this committee that the objectives of the Urban Renewal Program were formulated." Those objectives included conservation, upgrading, clearing, and redevelopment (Austin Urban Renewal Agency 1972, 1). In 1957 the Austin Urban Renewal Department proposed a series of urban renewal projects targeting several "areas of concern" that had been suggested for renewal by the Greater East Austin Development Committee. Almost immediately, private property rights advocates sued the city, and the Texas legislature responded by passing the appropriate enabling legislation, the Texas Urban Renewal Law, which permitted the creation of municipal "urban renewal agencies" to clear designated "slums" or rehabilitate "blighted" areas with federal financial support if the agencies were established by local referendum. Two years later, the referendum passed in Austin, and after the defeat of pending lawsuits, city officials proceeded in 1962 to create the AURA.

UT's attempt to seize such a large section of the city at one time was possible only because of the AURA. "Basically we came up with the proposition that the University's expansion to the east was feasible," city manager Bill Williams told reporters, "and could be tied in to [*sic*] an urban renewal program" (Castlebury 1966). UT's expansion plans seem to have been of particular interest to officials within the AURA. A 1965 map created by the agency marked areas to the west and east as areas of concern and therefore potential targets for urban renewal. Certainly the agency was aware that UT was buying up nearby land as part of an expansion effort and that this effort was disruptive to neighborhoods around the campus. Involving UT in the urban renewal program would have allowed the agency to channel the university's growth patterns. It also relieved AURA of the burden of seeking out developers because the university would be

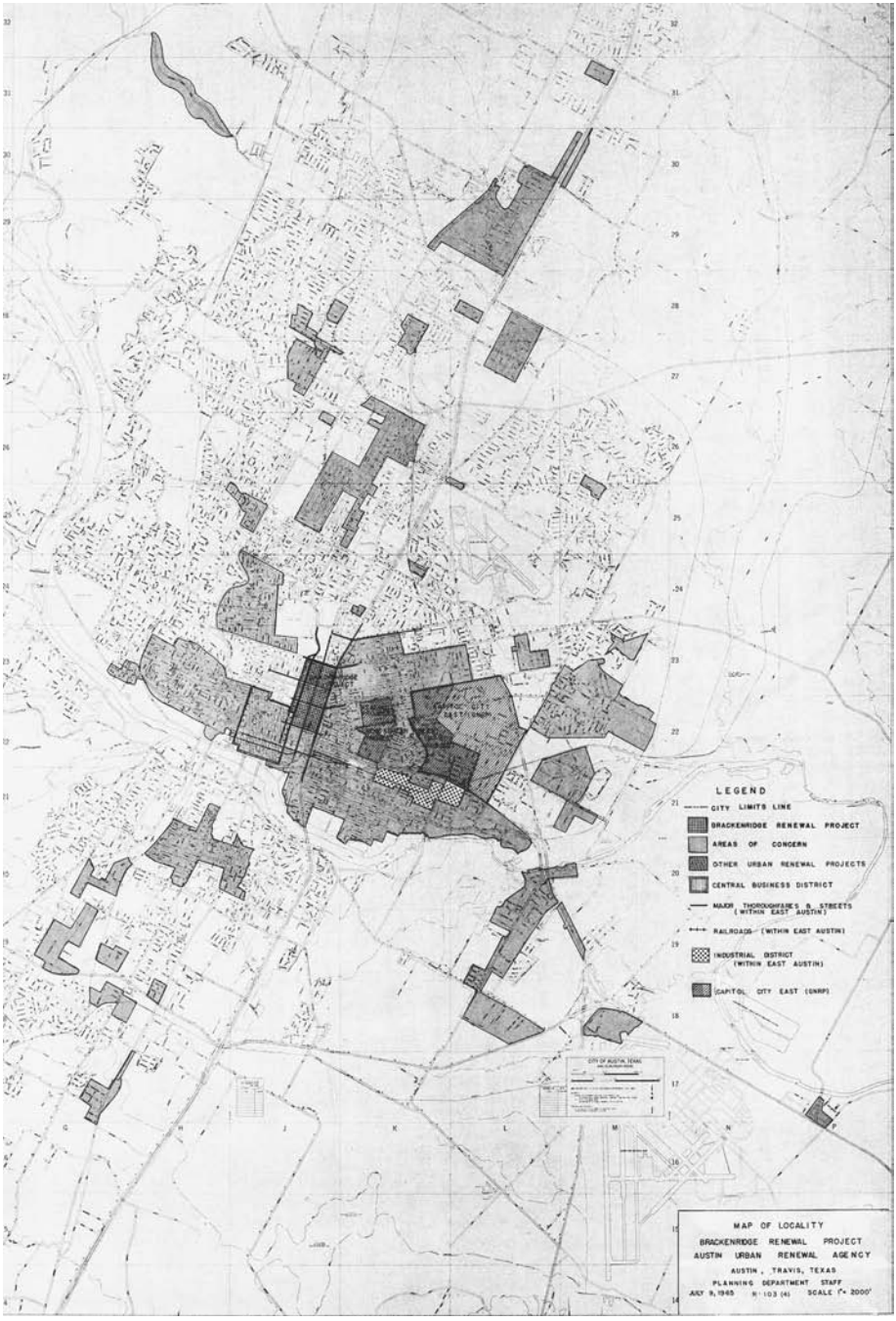

FIGURE 4. Austin Urban Renewal Agency Map of Austin with Area Designations, 1965. The Austin History Center.

the single redeveloper for the entire portion of the land that was scheduled to be taken. Moreover, administrators at the agency would have been particularly interested in involving UT as a partner because new federal statutes in the 1959 Housing Act allowed them to take advantage of the special two-to-one credit program (which they eventually did). For the regents, the plan would help alleviate their main concern, which was the potential financial costs of such a large land seizure and the additional money required to move the facilities from the old campus or construct new facilities on any newly acquired area; if the federal government accepted the plan, it would contribute two-thirds of the net costs of taking land in the Blackland (University of Texas Board of Regents 1966a). An additional benefit to acquiring the land with AURA's assistance was that doing so helped manage the expansion's social costs by having the federal government cover the expense of rehousing displaced people. Had the regents wantonly exercised their power of eminent domain, none of these costs would have been covered, a point stressed by members of the City Council that supported the federal government role in the university's land clearance program. However, it is unclear if such a huge land seizure proposal would even have been possible without sources to assuage the pain for the affected communities (City of Austin 1966).

The full extent of the eastern proposal, however, was never realized. Almost a year after the original proposal, in February 1967, the university announced that it was going to acquire only a little more than half of the originally planned 140 acres (Castlebury 1967). The reason, according to McCarver, was that "city officials could not find enough dilapidated housing to qualify for HUD (federal) funds" (McCarver 1995, 26). Instead, the university, attempting to gain more land, joined a plan related to another proposed urban-renewal project area (known as the Brackenridge), southeast of the main campus, that mostly involved the expansion of the state government's facilities (Austin Urban Renewal Agency 1967). The regents had originally rejected participating in this project area because less land was available to them but also because there would not be any federal subsidy (University of Texas Board of Regents 1966a). However, the final plan submitted to the federal government by AURA did ask for federal subsidies to cover two-thirds of the land acquisition costs, and at least $800,000 was provided to help displaced individuals and small businesses with their moving and relocation costs (Austin Urban Renewal Agency 1967, 1972). Nevertheless, the property that UT acquired within the Brackenridge Project area was only about thirty acres, at a cost of about $4.5 million, and several of these acres could not be redeveloped because they contained historic buildings (Alcalde 1968). Although properties in other areas of the tract were slated for rehabilitation, as a concession to UT, on the land acquired by the university, all the other structures, regardless of their condition, would be razed. This condition drew intense criticism from the surrounding community (Dupont 1969). Despite

these limitations, by 1975 UT still managed to acquire over one hundred acres with the assistance of AURA and the federal government.

These land clearances were devastating for the residents of the affected communities, particularly African Americans. As a 1984 exposé in the *Austin American-Statesman* noted, "For many owners urban renewal engendered bitterness that lives on, bitterness aggravated by city government inaction, lawsuits from angry neighborhood groups, and tragic accounts of families who lost the homes where they and their parents were born" (Pinkerton 1984a). In the two urban renewal areas taken over by UT, approximately one thousand people were displaced, mostly African Americans, and countless businesses, many African American–owned, were forced to close. While many people received relocation funds, the money was insufficient for people to buy a new home (Pinkerton 1984b). The result was that even more African Americans settled in East Austin because it was the only place they could afford to live, and these communities became much more isolated and increasingly disadvantaged (City of Austin 1979; Wilson, Rhodes, and Glickman 2007). Moreover, the urban renewal projects were plagued with problems. Housing projects were delayed, people went without payment, and many people found themselves moving from one area to another only to find that the new area was being condemned by urban renewal and that they would have to move again (Cryer 1969).

Conclusion

The failure to acquire a large tract of land to the east of the main campus did not stop UT from pushing east, although these later efforts would be without the support of the local urban renewal authority. In 1981 the regents asked UT president Peter Flawn to "take all necessary steps with regard to the purchase of additional acreage adjacent [to] or near" the main campus "for the purpose of future campus expansion" (University of Texas Board of Regents 1981, 125). Shortly after, the university announced it was going to take about twelve acres of land in the Blackland for the relocation of physical plant facilities from the main campus. Public ire once again emerged but eventually evaporated; the public was unaware that at the same time the university, through a third-party real estate broker, had begun secretly buying up additional plots in the Blackland that were adjacent to the 1966 and 1981 takings. After the first acquisitions happened, the administration's furtive plan was revealed, and there was immediate and loud public opposition. A nearly decade-long fight between UT and the neighborhood's residents ensued, receiving the attention of national media outlets such as the *New York Times* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Unlike in the 1960s and 1970s, this time local community activists and student organizers thwarted the bulk of UT's expansion plan (McCarver 1995).

It is important to recognize how much the university's land-development efforts reflected the university's mission at that time. In the 1960s and 1970s, UT remade the area around the campus and downtown Austin because of the federal government's growing involvement in higher education, particularly for research and development. UT "needed" to improve its research profile in order to capture more federal funds. Significantly, while university professors often partnered with various industries and supported industrial development, their research and the research profile of the university were largely financed by the federal government. Therefore, the role of the university was ancillary; it simply acted as a siphon for federal funds that could have positive spillovers for regional development. The landscape built in the areas UT acquired was designed to support the development of the inner workings of the main campus, particularly helping elevate the university's research profile, and largely consisted of support services, a series of specialized libraries (such as the LBJ Presidential Library), and conference centers.

Today there is a new vision for research universities, and this vision is reflected in UT's redevelopment plans for much of the land it acquired under urban renewal in the 1960s. The latest vision for UT and other universities imagines these institutions of higher education not as just partners with industry but as industrial entrepreneurs. University knowledge products make up an ever greater share of university's income, knowledge, and money (Lawton-Smith 2006, 124–128). Moreover, there is a growing belief that universities should collaborate with industry in knowledge production, which is why the private sector provides a much greater share of university research funds than forty years ago (Atkinson and Blanpied 2008, 41). Additionally, university administrators contend that the knowledge a university produces should be, at least in part, the commercial and profitable property of that university; this trend is especially true in the biomedical sciences (Geiger 2004, 216–230). Presently, the area of Austin that was seized as part of the Brackenridge Urban Renewal Project is being remade into a medical district, and there are plans to create an innovation district in the neighboring area. The medical district is being built by a partnership between UT and two health care providers (Seton and Central); it also involves a sizeable contribution from computer mogul, Michael Dell, who briefly attended UT as an undergraduate from 1983 to 1984. Initially, the area will have a new medical school, a research building, and a new teaching hospital run by Seton. Later, an entire campus dedicated to research, particularly biomedical research and technology, is slated to be built. Moreover, there is hope that the construction of an adjacent innovation district will "provide space and technical resources that can leverage university research and discoveries into new businesses and products" (University of Texas at Austin 2013, 36).

After the landscape is completely refashioned to make way for the new medical facilities, few people will probably miss or want to remember the rather

barren landscape the university built to its southeast in the 1960s and 1970s, a landscape whose crowning monument was a hulking, modernist concrete cylinder named the Frank Erwin Special Events Center, a tribute to the chairman of the Board of Regents who supervised the land expansion. But it is important to remember the tragic effects of these land seizures that displaced hundreds of underrepresented peoples. Most Austin residents remain ignorant about the sacrifices these people were forced to make to pave the way for a "city of knowledge."

CHAPTER 3

Bringing In the State

State Entrepreneurialism, the University, Land Development, and the High-Technology Sector

> The battle for national leadership among states is being fought on the campuses of the great research universities of the nation.
>
> **Peter Flawn, President of UT Austin**

> The presence of these major international companies has made Austin a global center versus a regional one, and the effect is magical.
>
> **Angeles Angelou, former Vice President of Economic Development of the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce**

Over the last forty years, scholars have noted how state governments have increasingly taken an entrepreneurial stance toward the promotion of industrial development (Eisinger 1988, 1995; Fosler 1992). State governments used their institutional powers and resources to propel industrial development for most of the twentieth century, but since the 1970s the strategies states have used to promote economic growth have become much broader and have taken on new characteristics (Cobb 1993). In particular, there has been a noticeable shift to what Eisinger described as supply-side vs. demand-side interventions. The older system centered on ways a state could amplify a business's effects on regional development through supply-side actions that lowered the costs of inputs through methods such as tax abatements. In contrast, more and more state governments have become willing to use demand-side policies and programs focused on developing new market opportunities through programs such as export assistance, venture capital funds, or technology transfer agencies (Leicht and Jenkins 1998). Moreover, newer state development strategies have focused almost exclusively on recruiting or promoting industrial development in newly emerging high-technology sectors of the economy (Eisinger 1988, 266–289; United States Congress 1983, 7).

These state industrial strategies also increasingly targeted the research functions of universities as resources that states could use to promote economic growth in high-technology industries (Eisinger 1988, 275; Feller 1992). Since at least the 1970s, state governments had supported certain kinds of university re-

search in the hope that these investments would create or maintain an educated workforce that could attract or spawn new high-technology firms (Long and Feller 1972). State governments had also shown an ever greater willingness to help finance and develop research parks to promote profitable collaborative relations between businesses and public universities (Luger and Goldstein 1991, appendix A). However, by the 1980s, as states created a much broader array of policies and programs to support technological development, these efforts, such as creating agencies that helped patent or license university discoveries, also focused on new ways to use institutions of higher education to promote regional development (Peltz and Weiss 1984; Schmandt et al. 1987).

The rise of this new entrepreneurial state paralleled and was connected to a transformation in how universities, particularly administrators and faculty, approached the value of their research programs (Etzkowitz 2003; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). Increasingly, public and private universities and their faculties were getting into the business of directly profiting from their research in varying ways, from licensing agreements or patents on new technologies to having an ownership stake in newly formed private spin-off enterprises that resulted from university-business collaborative partnerships (Geiger 2004). In public universities the pursuit of these revenues may be more connected than in private universities to the decline in state support, but this change occurred in all major research universities. Moreover, federal funding for all university research declined from about 67 percent in 1975 to about 60 percent in 1990. This decrease was largely offset by an increase in funds from private industry, whose contributions to university research rose from about 3 percent to about 7 percent over the same period (Atkinson 2008, 220). These funds, while small, are nevertheless important because they were designed to encourage closer university-industry collaborative relationships in order to ease the transfer of potentially commercializable knowledge from universities to the private sector (Berman 1990; Fairweather 1990). In many cases, these collaborations resulted in the development of new and immediately financially profitable products or process innovations and provided new revenue streams for universities (Lee 2000).

Yet this scholarship has largely missed the growing significance since the 1970s of universities as land developers. In particular, the research overlooks how these land development efforts were connected to how universities embraced changes in their research programs to support regional growth and new revenue streams (Levitt and Porter 1985, 4). Increasingly, universities began to use their endowments to buy additional land holdings, in part to diversify their financial portfolios, and to develop existing land into research parks or other commercial ventures to gain revenue from leases (Vermeulen 1980; Fink 1983). Universities were entering into the market as land speculators and, in many cases, were seeking to capitalize on their reputation as research centers in order to attract new tenants in high-technology sectors such as biotechnology or mi-

croelectronics (Levitt and Porter 1985, 21; Pinck 1993). Moreover, through land development projects, universities could support regional economic growth by developing the physical infrastructure needed to attract or support the creation of new businesses, and they could use their resources to support research, often in collaboration with the private industries located in these facilities, to create new spin-off firms (Premus 1985, 24–33). While private universities were often at the forefront of these efforts, public universities also tried to establish new ways of gathering revenue from land development projects (Levitt and Porter 1985, 12–21). However, as quasi-state institutions, state universities often have special privileges, such as the ability to issue low-interest public bonds or a general exemption from any local land-use controls or zoning regulations (Curzen and Lee 1985, 60; McGown 1985, 46).

In the following chapter, I argue that Texas's industrial strategy to promote the regional development of high technology in Austin was inextricably connected to UT's unique role as the state's agent in land development. In the late 1970s UT was at the forefront of figuring out new ways to harness the economic value of the university's research to propel regional growth (Oden 1997; Smilor et al. 2007, 210–214). In particular, it developed an effective internal institutional system that eased technological transfer and encouraged profitable commercialization of discoveries; these efforts were firmly joined to a host of new state government initiatives in the 1980s (Butler 2010). Moreover, although UT had been a strong part of the local urban growth coalition for most of the city's history, during the 1980s the university's role within the local economy was enhanced, as was its power, in part because of the state's efforts. The state government helped refashion UT, as its agent, into a land developer that could support the industrialization of central Texas. To be sure, other state governments had been active in engaging their institutions of higher learning as the state's agent to support regional growth through land development, most significantly in North Carolina's research park. However, UT's actions stand out because it, as part of the state's program to promote industrial development, used its unique bonding authority, discussed in chapter 2, solely to acquire and develop land for two nationally recognized high-technology firms. Its role as land developer, in fact, proved to be the critical incentive in the state's successful attempt to secure this investment, an investment that drove Austin's regional development for decades.

The following chapter is broken into three sections. The first reviews the literature on the role federal and state policies have played in supporting the commercialization of university research across the United States and the success of other universities, particularly Stanford, in promoting growth in their regions, in part because of their role as land developers. This is followed by a section that examines how Austin began as a center for high technology, particularly the central role UT played as a land developer in securing the investment of two national corporate high-technology consortiums, and how having these firms re-

positioned the city within the national urban hierarchy. Finally, the last section shows how a new configuration of actors in the local growth coalition grew out of these efforts and how the state of Texas, because of UT's enhanced position as its actor, became a more significant force in driving economic growth in the region.

Federal and State Policies and the University as a "New Breed" of Land Developer

Beginning in the 1980s, federal policy toward science and technology increasingly became organized around a new "competitiveness agenda." The centerpiece of the agenda was to use "government funds to commercialize science and technology" in order to "increase U.S. share of global markets and to increase the numbers of high-technology, high-salaried jobs in the domestic economy" (Slaughter and Rhoades 1996, 304). The new policy grew out of the efforts of a coalition of interest groups that emerged in the late 1970s, led primarily by the emerging "medical-industrial" sector of biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. Within this sector, agents driven to increase their competitive position in the international marketplace worked with university managers (and some faculty, especially in the material and natural sciences) to steer federal research policy toward commercializing all research (including research done at universities) and establishing a system of government subsidies for that research. This newly formed coalition was instrumental in persuading national legislators to adopt new federal laws, such as the Bayh-Dole Act of 1980 (often likened to a second Morrill Act, an act discussed in detail later), that veered away from long-standing precedent and allowed all entities that received federal funds for research to patent, commercialize, and profit from their discoveries (Henderson and Smith 2002; Slaughter and Leslie 1997, 316–319). Slaughter and Rhoades argue that the changes brought about under the new competitiveness agenda also affected how universities were managed and governed. In particular, they argue that this new system of "academic capitalism," which orients university administrators increasingly toward a profit-centered outlook, emerged because of the desire to exploit the potential economic returns that could flow from more seamlessly embedding universities into the productive structure of the new knowledge economy.

The work of Slaughter and Rhoades is just one in a myriad of books and articles on the rise of what could broadly be called the "entrepreneurialization of the university" (Brint 2005; Etzkowitz 2003; Etzkowitz et al. 2000; Newfield 2003). All of these accounts, while different, seek to identify, and often to criticize, the reorientation of the university's core functions toward seeking profitable avenues for research. While these changes have had various effects on university education, research, and management and have been experienced

differently across a range of disciplines and specializations, one noticeable shift is the increasing willingness (and need) of universities to open new revenue streams from research discoveries either by partnering with the private sector in business ventures or through licensing and patenting agreements (Geiger 2004; Berman 2011). While these partnerships have primarily occurred in engineering and the natural and health sciences, business and management schools have also been increasingly important in building more financially profitable areas of research such as producer or business services (Slaughter and Rhoades 1996, 308).

The ability of university managers to partner with the private sector has largely been made possible by changes in the potential commercializability of basic research for the university. As Slaughter points out, "Change in the economy and the structure of science offered the university an alternative source of funding. In the early 1970s, the corporate community became enamored of high technology as a way to improve its position in the global market. At the same time, university science became a source of high technology. Discoveries in biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, computers, lasers, material sciences, and robotics made basic research performed in the university more available for product development and marketing. The distinction between research and development, always somewhat artificial, seemed to be disappearing entirely" (Slaughter 1990, 43).

The distinction between research and development (or between basic and applied research) had by and large reflected demands the federal government and private industry had placed on universities in the 1940s (Newfield 2003, 122–123). "Basic" (or fundamental) research came to be defined, particularly in material and natural sciences, as research that had no immediate commercial application. With the massive expansion of universities in the second half of the twentieth century, more of this type of research was undertaken largely by university researchers. "Applied" research had immediate uses and was done in research labs run by private companies or facilities, often in research parks, managed in partnership with universities.

Of course, this did not mean that "basic" research conducted in universities before the development of the knowledge economy was not valuable to government and commercial and private interests. Basic research always had a recognizable value for national defense and armaments, and this value in part drove universities and industrial firms into more intricate collaborations immediately after World War II (Kargon, Leslie, and Schoenberger 1992; Saxenian 1996). Moreover, private firms were interested in universities' research practices at least as far back as the early twentieth century, in part because of electrical and chemical firms' success in making innovative and profitable discoveries by funding research in private facilities (Noble 1977, 110–128). In fact, industry has been engaged in collaborative relationships with universities since the end of the nineteenth century, and this practice became increasingly common at the be-

ginning of the twentieth century (Geiger 1986, 174–177; United States National Science Board 1983, 1–4). At the dawn of the twentieth century, private industry was increasingly willing to finance research in universities because doing so served at least three purposes: (1) universities could produce more well-trained technical experts; (2) private industry could exercise a large degree of control over what was researched in universities; and (3) this arrangement "successfully shifted the burden of some significant costs, and risks, of modern industry from the private to the public sector" (Noble 1977, 147). The last point is especially important because many of the nation's leading research universities, especially those that expanded dramatically in the 1950s and 1960s, were public universities that continued to receive large portions of funding for their physical plants from state governments, even though private industry provided the majority of funding for research. In the period after the Second World War, however, private support for basic research became less significant to universities as the federal government's financial support of basic research grew dramatically (Graham and Diamond 1997, 34).

Many of the largest U.S. research universities are public and, therefore, creatures of their states, but federal policy has played a unique role in their development. Beginning in the early nineteenth century, the federal support to universities grew dramatically because of its role as a grantor of land. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, a series of federal legislative acts (perhaps the most famous being the 1862 Morrill Act) created a legal framework to provide land grants or a scrip to states for the development or expansion of institutions of higher learning in the "agricultural and mechanical arts" (Brubacher and Rudy 1997, 154). Many of today's leading public, and a handful of private, universities were established as a result of federal land grants. Later, in the second half of the twentieth century, the federal government greatly expanded its role in higher education by providing direct financial support for undergraduate and graduate education as well as faculty research (Clark 1991). Moreover, beginning in the 1970s, the federal government, largely through the National Science Foundation, took a leading role in helping foster closer relationships between universities and the private sector (Bowie 1994, 15–22).

Despite significant federal involvement, U.S. public higher education systems are the providence of state governments. For decades, state governments have been the primary vehicles for financial support, particularly for undergraduate education at state universities, as well as providing oversight in the management of public universities (Eckel and King 2007). Moreover, state universities were, in part, established with the intention of a more productive and cooperative relationship between the private sector (agriculture and industry) and the university (in both teaching and research) (Adams 2002, 275). In many instances, these collaborations were intended to enhance and cultivate particular local or regional geographical advantages, either industrial or agricultural (Cohen, Flor-

ida, and Randazzese 1996, 52–53). Since the 1970s, as more and more state governments created programs and policies to support the development of technological innovations, states across the country began to engage universities as indispensable partners in state economic growth strategies (Schmandt and Wilson 1988; Lambright and Tefch 1989; Harloe and Perry 2004; Lendel 2010; Mayer 2007; Luger 1985, 213). Programs were developed to garner outside investment or support indigenous firms, especially ones involved in research-intensive developing technologies, by exploiting the special relationship between states and their public universities (Feller 1988). The hallmark of these approaches was to harness the potential economic value of university research by promoting closer collaborations with the private sector in order to produce viable spin-off firms, or to encourage the direct commercialization of university discoveries through patenting and licensing efforts (Peltz and Weiss 1984).

To a large extent, state strategies developed in the 1980s that focused on university research and its potential returns for regional growth sought to emulate the economic success of certain regions, namely Silicon Valley in California, the Route 128 corridor in Massachusetts, and Research Triangle in North Carolina (Washburn 2008, 175). In these locales, the close and collaborative relationship between universities (particularly Stanford; the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard; and Duke University, the University of North Carolina, and North Carolina State) and private businesses had helped propel the areas' economic development (Smilor et al. 2007; Graham and Diamond 1997, 120; Fogarty and Sinha 1999). In particular, Stanford and MIT stood out because they had played a strong and active role in their regions since the 1950s, often acting like entrepreneurs by supporting the development of specific private firms.

The importance of universities to the development of industry in Palo Alto and Boston had been highlighted by public officials in the 1960s, and in the second half of the twentieth century there was an increasing recognition that universities had a key role in the development of what Margaret O'Mara has aptly called "cities of knowledge" (O'Mara 2005, 90–92). According to O'Mara, these cities, which had become the new centers for industrial innovations, shared at least three characteristics: (1) newly built and extensive suburbs were filled with predominately white, wealthy, and educated people; (2) a large number of these people, mostly white men, worked in firms in a research or management capacity; and (3) many of the so-called growth nodes in these suburbs were connected to technology firms that often had been developed with the financial support of universities. Beginning in the 1940s, Cold War ideas about planning stressed the necessity of "deconcentrating" vital infrastructural resources, particularly those associated with national defense, because of the danger posed by a focused missile attack on overconcentrated resources. Since most high-technology firms were part of the national defense infrastructure, their suburbanization was encouraged as part of a dispersion policy that dictated how defense-related

funds were spent (O'Mara 2005, 18–57). Moreover, local urban elites, aware of the opportunities this spending offered for urban growth, pushed to capture a portion of the federal largesse, especially for infrastructure. So too did university administrators, who believed that the growth potential of their universities was increasingly connected to their ability to capture large portions of federal spending on research, especially in areas related to defense.

It is no surprise, therefore, that universities began to become "a new breed of city builder" (O'Mara 2005, 59). In particular, as universities became more engaged in urban and regional development, especially as land developers, their efforts helped foster the growth of many suburbs. The embodiment of their newfound role as land developer was the myriad research parks built in the 1960s, often in newly developing suburban communities. Largely modeled on the suburban industrial parks of the 1950s, research parks were unique "in their relationship with institutions of higher education" (O'Mara 2005, 69). Usually managed and owned by universities, research parks offered a space to connect the priorities of private-sector industrial development to the research capacity of universities. While they often housed private-sector laboratories, many research parks were indistinguishable from the university's main campus. Moreover, firms in research parks often enjoyed a close relationship with university departments and faculty, in some cases even employing faculty to work as consultants.

Since the 1970s, more and more cities and regions have attempted to become "cities of knowledge," and some, like Austin, have been successful. In part this reflects the increasing significance of the commercial value of university research for regional economic growth (Harloe and Perry 2004; Lendel 2010; Mayer 2007). It also shows how many more universities became more active in developing land and providing the critical physical infrastructure improvements to support the development of high technology in their regions (Luger and Goldstein 1991). In fact, the two activities increasingly converged. Universities increasingly sought out new ways to tap the financial returns of their research capacities, often conjoining these efforts to an ever greater number of real estate ventures that sought to retain, promote, or attract high-technology development (Premus 1985).

However, universities were not alone in supporting efforts to remake their function as producers of knowledge into a core driver of economic development. As the section has shown, the federal government and state governments enacted essential legal and policy changes and established programs that connected the research functions of universities to industrial development policy. These policies and programs were significant in helping universities capitalize on and reinforce the broader changes in the economy that increasingly valued knowledge-intensive practices. As I will show, state policy was also critical in refashioning the role that a university would have as a land developer and as the state's agent in promoting urban growth.

The Making of a High-Tech Austin

Austin's pattern of development is a paradigmatic case of a "city of knowledge." High-technology firms have tended to locate in the city's growing northwest and southeastern suburbs since at least the 1960s, and this process, which accelerated during the 1970s and 1980s, was largely reinforced by the expansion of UT's suburban facilities (Kahn and Farley 1984, 91; Ryan, Horton, and Arbingast 1968, 1; Brooke 1980).

Seeking to take advantage of the external economies of scale, high-technology firms were located in distinct clusters along U.S. 183 (Research Boulevard), a road built in the 1950s that runs from the northwest to the southeast section of Austin. One area of considerable development was in the northwest section, at the intersection of Highway 1 (the MOPAC Expressway) and U.S. 183, where UT's Balcones Research Center (discussed in the next section) was located. By the early 1980s a sizeable agglomeration of technology firms, including IBM, Radian, Texas Instruments, and the Microelectronics and Computer Corporation, could be found in this northwestern quadrant. Southeast along U.S. 183, there was a cluster of firms near the intersection of Interstate 35 and another large one further east at Farm-to-Market Road 969. There, defense contractor Tracor built a large manufacturing plant in the 1960s, and Motorola and Rolm established facilities in the 1970s and 1980s, respectively. Finally, at the intersection of U.S. 183 and State Highway 71, where Sematech would later be located, there was a considerable group of technology firms that included, among others, Advanced Micro Devices, Lockheed, and Data General (a company that later sold its land and buildings to UT).

As in the rest of Texas, the development of the high-technology economy in Austin is connected to the largesse of federal military spending (Farley and Glickman 1986, 409). One local Austin firm that benefitted from this money was Texas Research Associates (Tracor), a defense electronics contractor founded in 1955 (Kleiner 2013). The first Austin-based company listed on the Fortune 500, Tracor played an especially important role in the region's development because by 1975, the company had spun off at least fourteen other high-technology firms (many working on non-defense-related products) in the region.

Moreover, the company's success might also prove the value of having a close relationship with the University of Texas. Tracor was formed as a partnership among four researchers at UT's Defense Research Lab (DRL): mechanical engineer Frank McBee and physicists Richard Lane, Chester McKinney, and Jess Stanbrough. The first collaboration of its kind in Austin to effectively commercialize on this research relationship, "TRACOR drew its talent almost exclusively from University of Texas engineering departments and especially from the DRL" (Busch 2011, 166). Throughout its history, Tracor and its spin-offs (and their spin-offs) would use both informal and formal connections to the university to boost their fortunes, particularly by tapping into the knowledge and scientific

expertise of UT faculty and students. One notable instance was chemistry professor and former UT president Norman Hackerman, who joined the company in 1956 (Busch 2013).

Tracor was not the first firm in Austin to benefit from a connection to the university. Beginning in the mid-1940s, a growth coalition led by the local automobile dealer C. B. Smith crystallized, mainly through the work of the Industrial Division of Austin's Chamber of Commerce, which had been established to figure out a local strategy to increase Austin's industrial infrastructure (Austin Area Economic Development Foundation 1948). The members of this group included local businessmen such as bankers and realtors, leaders from local government, and one chemical engineering professor from UT, William Cunningham. Government and educational services, whose economic returns were mostly seasonal and also lacked many of the compounding returns found in industrial sectors, still overwhelmingly dominated Austin's economy. Part of the development strategy offered by the coalition relied on maximizing the central role UT could play in supporting private industrial research. As an article published in 1950 noted, "Their plan particularly encompassed the encouragement of new enterprises which could use the University's research facilities for the development of their products and made a contract with the University for that purpose, probably the first such arrangement ever entered into between an institution of learning and a civic organization" (C. B. Smith 1984).

The group then proposed creating the Austin Area Economic Development Foundation (AAEDF), as a subsidiary of the Chamber of Commerce, to coordinate efforts between UT and businesses in the region. In addition, the AAEDF also helped connect upcoming industries or firms that decided to locate a branch in Austin to loans and other financial resources.

Additionally, the UT-controlled Balcones Research Center (BRC, now renamed the J. J. Pickle Research Campus) played an important role as an interface between the business community and the university. The facility had been a magnesium factory during the Second World War, after which it had been decommissioned and remained unused. Two engineering professors, C. R. Granberry and J. Neils Thompson, strongly supported by Austin's postwar growth coalition, spearheaded the effort to acquire the property for research purposes, and after a series of lengthy negotiations with the federal government, many involving then congressman Lyndon Baines Johnson, UT was able to secure a long-term lease for the site (Long 1962). The plant was then quickly refashioned as a research site, primarily for defense-related engineering research. While the BRC had a minor role in the 1950s in helping Austin secure the investment of some private firms, such as Jefferson Chemical, the site remained exclusively dedicated to noncommercial university research, particularly research that was associated with national defense.

Notable changes happened at the BRC in the 1970s, however. First, UT gained

title to the land in 1971, when the federal government gave the property to the university at no cost. After this transition, at the behest of UT's regents, the BRC was reorganized "as a campus for substantial university research facilities in interaction with industry and government" (Kragie 1986, 21). To support this new mission the BRC underwent several substantial land expansions and became a center that "pioneer[ed] new ways for The University and industry to work together . . . in areas of advanced research and development" (Kragie 1986, 22). However, unlike some other research parks (most notably Stanford's), the BRC did not became a site for the operation of a large number of for-profit companies. Nevertheless, the BRC was successful in supporting local industrial research through shared collaborations, and this, in part, helped propel Thompson's lifelong interest in figuring out ways to forge a more profitable relationship between the university and the business community. Thompson later served in several leadership roles at Austin's Chamber of Commerce, including as its president from 1973 to 1974 (Busch 2011).

Austin had developed a small but significant infrastructure of high-technology firms by the early 1980s, but their impact on Austin's urban development remained relatively limited. At the start of the 1980s, most of the firms were homegrown, and research-related firms were directly associated with or spawned from Tracor or the branch plant locations of several national companies, including Texas Instruments, IBM, Motorola, and Rolm (Brooke 1980; Hobbs and Rundell 1982; Gibson, Smilor, and Kozmetsky 1991; Glasmeier 1988).

However, by the end of the decade, the number of technology firms in the city had grown at a phenomenal rate, in part because of decisions by two major national research firms, Microelectronic and Computer Corporation (MCC) and Semiconductor Manufacturing Technology (Sematech), to make Austin the location of their national headquarters. Numerous studies, particularly the exhaustive book by Gibson and Rogers, have investigated how these firms helped change the composition of the regional technology infrastructure and provided a catalyst for the city's explosive growth in the 1980s. There is no point in repeating all of the details, so instead the next section focuses mostly on the two aspects that are major themes of this chapter: the role of the state government and UT's role as a land developer.

There were at least four important similarities shared by MCC and Sematech, which are explored in more detail later in this chapter. First, both were established to help increase U.S. competitiveness in R & D, particularly in the electronics industry, at a time when the nation's position within the international hierarchy was, many argued, connected to innovation in core industrial sectors (Kahn and Farley 1984, 1–2; United States Congress 1992, 2–3). Second, both were examples of a new type of private for-profit company, a for-profit research consortium, where firms in similar, if not competing, sectors of the economy were able to legally collaborate on basic research projects. Third, to select the

site for their national headquarters, both corporations held nationwide competitions, which enticed many locales and their states to make very generous offers of subsidies and incentives to attract their investment. Finally, and perhaps most significantly for my argument, UT played a critical role in helping Texas secure both firms through its ability to use its unique bonding authority to become a land developer.

MCC was the first for-profit research consortium of its kind and was established to help rebuild the competitive position of the United States in the microelectronics sector by undertaking basic research that had no immediate commercial applications (Frontain 2010). In 1982 the antitrust division of the U.S. Justice Department, after an intense lobbying effort by MCC and its supporters, deemed such industrial collaborations through consortiums legal, in part because it held that existing antimonopoly provisions were unnecessary restrictions that only fettered U.S. industry in the face of increased international competition. In 1984 the principle behind the Justice Department's decision became law after Congress unanimously passed the National Cooperative Research Act (NCRA) (Gibson and Rogers 1994, Rule 1985). Several large private shareholding companies, which owned varying stakes in the firm, financed MCC's multimillion-dollar annual operations, but these shareholders did not receive direct monetary dividends. Instead, MCC paid back its investors with basic research discoveries that could be used by any of the collaborating firms for commercially viable ends or to help create separate, profitable spin-off companies.

In 1987 Sematech, an industrial consortium of semiconductor firms, was formed (Browning and Shetler 2000). Like MCC, Sematech brought together leading national firms in similar areas of the economy to collaborate on basic research. However, unlike MCC, the federal government had an active role in the consortium as a financial partner. In fact, half of the firm's $200 billion annual budget came from its fourteen shareholder companies, and the other half came from the federal government's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). The government was so heavily involved because, many influential figures argued, declining U.S. competitiveness in semiconductor technology posed not only an economic problem but also a substantial defense risk (Gibson and Rogers 1994, 475–478). So while Sematech, like MCC, engaged in basic research that had no immediate commercial applications, its primary goal was, as Browning and Shetler noted, "to improve core manufacturing competence rather than on making breakthrough end products with competitive features." Still, over time, some discoveries made at Sematech did become commercially viable products or processes, and several nondefense firms were profitably spun off (Browning and Shetler 2000, viii).

UT, particularly the bonding authority provided by the Permanent University Fund (PUF, discussed in chapter 2), had a crucial role in getting MCC to locate its national headquarters in Austin. In 1983, fifty-seven cities in twenty-seven states competed to be the location of MCC's corporate headquarters; Texas, in conjunc-

tion with Austin, was selected primarily because it was able to offer the largest incentives package of any of the competitors—a package worth more than $70 million. Importantly, about $50 million came directly or indirectly from the UT system. UT justified such a large expenditure because of the potential benefits that MCC would provide the university. By 1989 it was estimated that MCC contributed about $1.7 million annually to the university, and the largest chunk of these funds, about $1 million, was provided as grants to UT researchers (University of Texas Board of Regents 1988e; Benningfield 1989).

Originally, about half of the money for MCC was supposed to come from UT's own funds or special Texas legislative appropriations to the university, and the other half was supposed to come to the university from private sources that made donations to "The University of Texas System High-Tech Fund" (Downing 1983). The largest single portion of the state's subsidy for MCC, around $20 million, was for the construction of a new building on an undeveloped tract at the BRC that was worth an estimated $3 million but was to be leased back to MCC for a mere two dollars a year (University of Texas Board of Regents 1983). At first, UT's regents had agreed to pay only $5 million (it later ended up being over $14 million) of the $20 million for the new building from any of its sources, including proceeds from PUF bonds that could legally be used only for capital improvements (University of Texas Board of Regents 1984, 148–149). Approximately another $27 million, either from the dividends derived from or the sale of bonds issued against the annual revenue of the PUF, depending on the expenditure, was offered: $15 million (of a $20 million pledge from the state government) to help the departments of engineering and computer science recruit new, or give raises to existing, faculty; $2 million to purchase new equipment for MCC; and about another $10 million (given as a special legislative appropriation) for various projects, such as supporting the research of graduate students in computer science and engineering. The remaining $23.5 million in subsidies promised to MCC was supposed to be raised from private donors by the Texas High-Tech Fund: $15 million, later increased to over $16 million, for the costs of construction and about $7 million for faculty support. While the fund was established at the behest of the governor, it was spearheaded by a group of Texas's business elites, who helped raise private contributions and funnel them through the university to MCC. Its fundraising goal, however, fell short by about $7.6 million, and eventually UT was forced to pay an additional $9.5 million from its bond proceeds toward the construction of MCC's new office building (Benningfield 1988; Gibson and Rogers 1994, 155; University of Texas Board of Regents 1987, 7). Other than the university's own funds and the private contributions that flowed through it, the only other major contributor was the local business community, primarily banks, which offered more than $20 million in additional incentives to future MCC employees; the bulk of this money was for subsidizing single-family mortgages at two percentage points below the market rate.

Sematech, like MCC, had no official connection to UT, but once again UT and

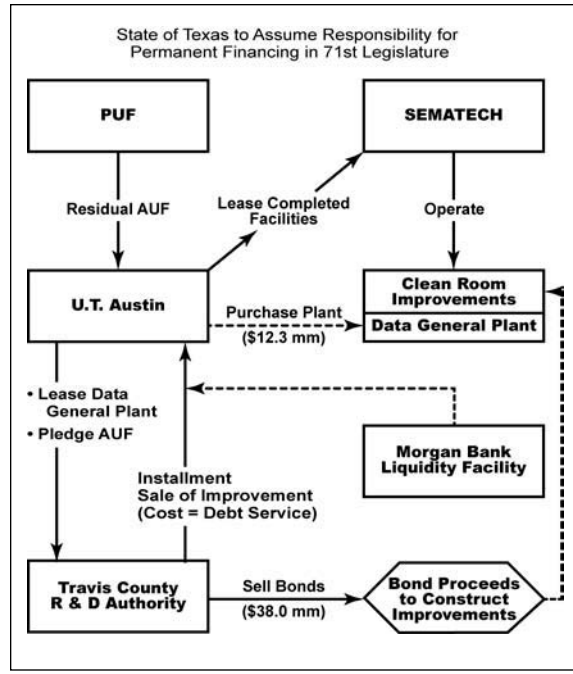

FIGURE 5.
Sematech Interim Financing Structure. Based on image found in Board of Regents Real Estate Records, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History the University of Texas at Austin.

its bonding authority had a central role as the state's vehicle to channel funds for land development. In the much more extensive national competition among thirty-four states with 135 proposals to secure Sematech's headquarters, Texas offered a similarly massive $68 million (Gibson and Rogers 1994, 487). About $18 million was to be spent in four areas: approximately $10 million on mortgage incentives, $5 million on a cooperative state research fund, $1.5 million of time on UT's supercomputer, and about $1.5 million in various other incentives. But the vast majority of the incentive package was $50 million for land development and acquisition, which, save a relatively small contribution of $250,000 from the City of Austin, came exclusively from bonds that UT issued against the PUF (Benningfield 1988; SEMATECH Foundation of Texas 1987).

The university was compelled to buy land for Sematech, retrofit an existing building, and then lease it back to the firm for a nominal fee. While UT had again wanted to use undeveloped land on the BRC site, Sematech preferred a second option that had been offered to them: the refashioning of an abandoned Data General Corporation manufacturing plant in southeast Austin. The problem was that this building was not yet UT's property, and it was unclear how the university could acquire land for a secondary user. To make it possible for UT to be the sole purchaser of land for a separate company, the Texas legislature passed a

law that allowed for nonprofit research development agencies to be established between county governments and private entities, such as the university (University of Texas Board of Regents 1988b, 1988c). Subsequently, the Travis County Research Development Authority (TCRD) was established, and UT was able to acquire the property at about $12 million as an agent in this authority and rename it the Montopolis Research Center (MRC) (University of Texas Board of Regents 1988f). The TCRD issued $38 million in bonds (the interest was paid by the university's endowment and the collateral was the PUF) to renovate the site and build and furnish a "cleanroom" (University of Texas Board of Regents 1988e).

It is worth noting that Texas's package to bring Sematech to Austin was small when compared to the offers of other states, so it should be stressed that UT's endowment played the critical role in the state's bid. In the 1986 competition many state incentive offers were as much as seven times larger than Texas's offer, but many of these proposals relied on unsecure funds such as future state appropriations. Texas's ability to leverage UT's resources was essential, as Sematech's executives saw the funds promised in Texas's incentives package as more secure than the financial packages offered by other states (Whitney 1988; Cunningham and Jones 2013).

UT's role in supporting MCC and Sematech did not end with land development. In the 1990s, the university helped facilitate the spin-off of two for-profit firms from MCC and one from Sematech (Gibson and Rogers 1994, 452–454). These resembled earlier attempts to engage UT with the business community through the AAEDF, but in the 1980s UT had taken over the leading role in promoting these commercialization efforts, primarily, although not exclusively, through the Institute for Constructive Capitalism (IC^2), established in 1977, and its program the Austin Technology Incubator (ATI), founded in 1989. These two institutions within UT, largely building on previous initiatives by the Chamber of Commerce, have played an increasingly important role in helping develop the regional economy by engaging UT, more and more, in activities that promote the marketability of research discoveries (Gibson and Butler 2013, 66–72).

However, the most important lesson learned from Texas's ability to secure the investment of MCC, a lesson later seen in the state's successful bid to capture Sematech, was that UT, as a quasi-state actor, could play a unique role as a land developer in supporting the local growth coalition and Texas's larger economic development strategy. As former chancellor of the UT System Dr. Hans Mark remarked on Sematech's decision to locate in Austin: "Look at Silicon Valley. The presence of Stanford is critical (to the development of microelectronics there). The dean of the School of Engineering started it by conceiving the ingenious notion of making very favorable land deals for bright graduate students. One example was for two students named Hewlett and Packard: the board of trustees gave them a place to build a factory. It worked like crazy. We're doing the same

thing. It means literally hundreds of millions of dollars for this town, but more important, it provides intellectual stimulation" (Benningfield 1989).

Of course, graduate students from UT founded neither MCC nor Sematech. Moreover, while Stanford had played a critical role as a land developer in supporting the development of high-technology firms in Silicon Valley, it leased an existing building in the Stanford Research Park to Hewlett-Packard and other local start-up firms (O'Mara 2005, 118–122). In contrast, UT built new research facilities and in one case also acquired new land for these firms. By drawing a parallel between the two cases, Chancellor Mark actually downplays the novelty of UT's behavior as a real estate developer and financier that used millions of dollars in research funds, its bonding authority, and other incentives to help secure the exogenous investment of national firms as part of the state of Texas's industrial strategy.

A New Growth Coalition: The State, the Austin Chamber of Commerce, and UT

The decisions of MCC and Sematech to locate in Austin substantially refashioned the economic geography of the city and assisted in the broader transformation of Austin from largely a branch-plant economy into a manufacturing and commercial research and development center (Farley and Glickman 1986, 408; Oden, Kang, and Kwon 2007, 51). Although the importance of these two firms to the local economy may be overstated at times, it's undeniable that during the 1980s several high technology firms, such as AMD, IBM, Motorola, and Dell were created in, expanded, or relocated their operations to the Austin region.

Much of this growth was strongly assisted by the state government's investment in Austin, primarily through UT. For sure, UT had played an important part in the city's growth since its founding in 1881, when the decision that the university's main campus would be built in Austin delighted the business community because of the university's potentially positive effects on the city's real estate (Long 1964). The realization of the university's possible economic contribution grew more substantial from at least the early 1950s, when building an economy around science and research became a centerpiece of the local growth coalition's strategy. The state's gradually increasing investment in the engineering and natural sciences at UT supported this strategy by helping create a stable and skilled workforce that could be employed locally in firms in related fields, and it also elevated the university's reputation and helped attract outside high-technology firms to Austin (Oden, Kang, and Kwon 2007, 50; Smilor, Gibson, and Kozmetsky 1989, 53). Moreover, UT spent millions on its computer sciences and engineering programs in the 1980s, from hiring thirty-two endowed professors at salaries plus other incentives totaling $1 million each to providing

$20 million for a new microelectronics and engineering building that was developed on the west tract of the BRC near MCC (SEMATECH Foundation of Texas 1987, 7). These investments greatly enhanced the reputation and standing of the university and helped encourage further industrial growth (Gibson and Rogers 1994, 446–447).

However, what I want to suggest is that the state's refashioning of UT as its agent in support of Texas's industrial strategy fundamentally altered the university's position within the local growth coalition. The work the local growth coalition did in providing the winning bid for MCC in the early 1980s engaged the university in a new way, particularly as a land developer that could support the development of commercial enterprises. Furthermore, while the arrangement among the actors was certainly similar to those in the past, there are some noticeable and important differences. In particular, the growth coalition that supported the development of high technology in Austin was different from the previous growth coalition in at least three respects: (1) the institutional location of its key actors, (2) the relationship between the state government and the local growth coalition, and (3) the position of UT in the state's and the local growth coalition's industrial strategies.

A new political arrangement that coalesced in the Texas campaign to secure MCC can be seen in the two task forces that then Democratic governor Mark White established to help the state win the competition for the consortium: the Governor's Task Force and the Austin Task Force (Gibson and Rogers 1994, 128–134). The Governor's Task Force included elites from the local business community, the city government, and two of Texas's flagship university systems (A&M and UT). Former San Antonio mayor Henry Cisneros, chancellor of the UT System Donald Walker, and technology magnate Ross Perot, among several others, were participants. Moreover, the Austin Task Force included a mix of local elites from the private and public sectors. Six people served on both task forces, and three of these played a very significant role: the president of Austin's Chamber of Commerce, Ben Head (also president of a local bank); Austin developer John Watson; and lawyer Pike Powers, then executive assistant to Democratic governor Mark White and later president of Austin's Chamber. Moreover, George Kozmetsky, UT's dean of the College of Business, professor, and director of the IC^2 institute, while not officially on these task forces, played a very important role in facilitating a new relationship between UT and the business community; this was, in fact, his central mission during his term at UT. Kozmetsky, enthused at the prospect of creating a high-technology infrastructure to employ former students, helped Walker develop the "basic strategy underlying Texas' bid for MCC: raise funds to endow professorships in computer and electrical engineering . . . in order to improve microelectronics research" (Gibson and Rogers 1994, 117). Although then UT president Peter Flawn was reportedly reluctant "about involving the University of Texas in such a for-profit enterprise," Kozmetsky

persuaded him and others to make the university the "cornerstone" of the incentive package offered to MCC (Gibson and Rogers 1994, 117).

When the Sematech proposal came up, this time under the leadership of Republican governor Bill Clements, the available evidence suggests that, as Pike Powers noted, "the same collaborative team was in place" (Powers 2004, 57). This time, however, the group was organized through the Sematech of Texas Foundation, an organization created by the Austin Chamber of Commerce to coordinate with the leadership of UT and the governor's office (SEMATECH Foundation of Texas 1987, 12). Again, Pike Powers, who chaired the group, played a central role in developing the incentives package to bring Sematech to Texas. Other leading members included Peter Mills, then president for economic development at the Chamber of Commerce; Edward Vetter, chairman of the Texas Department of Commerce; Jack Blanton, chairman of the UT Board of Regents; and Ben Streetman, a UT professor of electrical and computer engineering who had also played a minor role in the MCC campaign (University of Texas Board of Regents 1988a, 1988d; Barta 1996, 380). Moreover, because half of Sematech's operating budget was to come from the federal government, the power of the Texas delegation in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives was important, especially the active lobbying efforts by then congressman James Pickle, who represented a district that included Austin (Gibson and Rogers 1994, 492–497).

There are some significant differences in the makeup of the growth coalition that formed in Austin in the 1980s and the one that existed in the immediate postwar period through the AAEDF group. First, in the effort to recruit MCC and Sematech not a single member from Austin's local government was a leading partner. Although the City of Austin did provide a comparatively small contribution to the Sematech package, nobody in Austin outside the business community appears to have been active in the recruitment effort for either firm. Moreover, only one person from the core group, which represented UT in these efforts, was from engineering or the computer sciences, even though these departments, supposed to be the primary beneficiaries of the private investment, were the reason offered for the university's involvement in the process. Instead, the people representing both universities were administrators, and the leading figure in the campaign to bring MCC to Austin was the dean of the business school. In the MCC effort, two engineering professors were consulted but had little more than a supporting role, although one of them did appear to be more active in the effort to persuade Sematech to make Austin its national quarters.

Moreover, as Austin's economic growth became connected to the state government's competitive strategy, the university was engaged in a new way, fundamentally altering UT's relationship to the state government. Farley and Glickman noted how MCC was "seen as part of a broader effort by business and government . . . MCC must be considered a significant development for the Texas economic development strategy, since it represent[ed] an unprecedented response to a global challenge through a joint venture of one of the nation's leading research

universities, many of the nation's largest multinational corporations, and the state's leading business and political figures" (Farley and Glickman 1986, 409).

Sematech too was to fit tidily into the state's overall industrial policy framework. Certainly it was a major victory for the state's progrowth forces, but, more importantly, it affirmed a basic principle held by these state government leaders—UT should play a central role in boosting economic growth and supporting the diversification of the state's economy. As former Texas lieutenant governor Bill Hobby said in his official statement about Sematech's decision to locate in Austin, "There has never been a better example in recent times of the impact of higher education on the state's economic well-being" (Engelking 1996, 36).

The effect of this new state influence in Austin, particularly in the capacity of the business community to connect the state's economic strategy to local development, made it possible to largely bypass some resistance from local power structures, especially Austin's municipal government. As Farley and Glickman observed, "The development strategy [for Austin] was principally the work of the Texas business community, University of Texas administrators and state officials" (Farley and Glickman 1986, 412). Yet Farley and Glickman largely overlook the critical role played by members of the local business community, particularly those from the Austin Chamber of Commerce, which continued to have a strong role in influencing growth dynamics in Austin. These local actors were especially successful at promoting regional growth because of their ability to mobilize the new possibilities created by state intervention (particularly those associated with UT's role as the state's agent and its financing and land development capacities) and coordinate them with local business interests.

Conclusion

What some have called the "Austin model of development" is, for the most part, just about bringing the state of Texas, through the university, into the local growth coalition as a leading actor. This changing political-economic dynamic helps explain why local power brokers from the business community moved toward the state and away from local government. Most authors attribute this shift to the rise of antigrowth forces in the local government and their unwillingness to support the business community (Farley and Glickman 1986; Orum 1987; Swearingen 2010; Kim 1998). Certainly this factor is important: members of the local business community would have tried to bypass their opponents in the local government by collaborating with actors at the state level, who were friendlier to their vision of Austin's future. Nevertheless, the evidence suggests that this relationship was also made possible by a change in the state's position toward the role public higher education could play in promoting regional growth. This new state involvement, in fact, proved to be a decisive factor in creating a new political space for an alliance among these actors, an alliance that

would shape urban development in Austin. In other words, Austin's success in capturing the investment of MCC and Sematech was the result of a concerted state industrial strategy and the increasing willingness of government leaders to leverage state resources in a demand-side fashion to promote regional growth. As a consequence, the center of gravity for members of Austin's local growth coalition changed because state policy had empowered state actors over the local government.

These political shifts also transformed the role UT had in Austin's growth coalition. Up until the 1980s, UT's role in the growth coalition had been much more ancillary. Certainly by 1950 it was recognized that the university had made significant and positive contributions to the local economy beyond just being a major institution that contributed to private real estate development by bringing students and professors into the city. Instead, it assumed a role as the centerpiece of what would now be called the new knowledge economy. Research and science were increasingly valuable, and local growth advocates had seen the positive returns from integrating the university more into the local growth coalition and its efforts to bring companies to the region. Some scholars, therefore, see a common thread in Austin's historical evolution and claim that the presence of a prestigious research university that generates lots of employable workers and a creative atmosphere is the primary reason that many other firms ended up locating in Austin (Florida 2005, 79–81; Smilor, Gibson, and Kozmetsky 1989). While such claims may be overstated, and in some cases self-serving, such a narrative does recognize UT's central role in the development of the region's industrial high-technology infrastructure and, as a consequence, its increasing significance to Austin's growth coalition.

Yet such accounts are only partially correct because they largely fail to acknowledge UT's major role as the state's agent in land development ventures that were intended to secure external investments for Texas. It is therefore important to highlight the contrast between the two kinds of activities exercised by the university that increased the region's competitiveness: the first, supporting the production of engineers and interfacing with local companies to commercialize technologies; and the second, acting as a land developer that opened up a space for the growth of private corporations. The former action still engaged the university as a producer of knowledge, even if this production was subordinated to the interests of corporations, local business coalitions, and national (or state) competitiveness. The latter, however, opened up new possibilities by connecting a state university's endowment, and its bonding authority, to land development schemes designed to subsidize for-profit businesses and support the state government's industrial policy.

PART II

Urban Transformations

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CHAPTER 5

Contesting Sustainability

"Smart Growth" and the Redevelopment of Austin's East Side

> What is an environmental group? Who is an environmentalist? How might different kinds of environmental groups influence the state of the environment—and the state of society? These charged questions lie at the heart of the problem of how to define environmentalism and its future direction.
>
> **Robert Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring: The Transformation of the American Environmental Movement***

Over the last twenty years, two processes have emerged as the dominant forces shaping the politics of urban development and planning practice in cities throughout the United States: the development of a more competitive international environment for investment and an increasing recognition that reorganizing cities is a necessary part of the solution to current environmental problems. Taken together, these two processes have significantly restructured the organization of urban space, particularly traditional central business districts. While distinct, the two are also interrelated. It is impossible to grapple with the myriad of global environmental problems without understanding the impact of patterns of investment and disinvestment and the environmental limits of growth.

On the one hand, competition among cities for investment has become more pronounced as revolutions in telecommunications and transportation have annihilated the distances between cities and reduced the friction of moving goods, information, and people across space. People and places are more interconnected, and local differences often seem to be eroding because in many respects the world is more uniform and, figuratively, smaller. This is not to say that the world's geography is even. The relative advantages of a location's distinctiveness have not diminished but are actually becoming more pronounced. To distinguish themselves from their competitors and to boost their positions in the hierarchy of the global investment marketplace, some cities have been very effective at entrepreneurially using their local resources (Hall and Hubbard

1998; Harvey 1989a; Savitch and Kantor 2002; Tretter 2009). The cultivation of environmental amenities and an ecological image has become part and parcel of a strategy to spur economic development because it has been shown to attract and retain educated and highly skilled workers and promote industrial development in innovative sectors such as renewable energy (Dooling 2009; While, Jonas, and Gibbs 2004; Jonas and While 2007).

On the other hand, while environmentalists once criticized cities as unnatural and antithetical to an ecologically sustainable future, cities are increasingly understood to be a necessary part of the solution to global environmental problems. Whether the issue is global climate change, fresh water, or open habitat, environmentalists have come to realize that reorganizing cities offers a unique opportunity to make societal relations with nature more sustainable (Dittmar 2009; Keil 2007). There is a growing recognition that solving tomorrow's environmental challenges requires a more holistic vision of the urban and nonurban today: that cities can be refashioned, becoming more sensitive to potential environmental impacts and integrated with natural surroundings. Although some environmentalists, such as Alan Weisman, have proffered a sustainable vision of a future world without humans (Weisman 2007), others focus on ways to avoid this bleak prospect for the collective human future. As more than 50 percent of the world's population currently lives in cities and makes taxing demands on the physical environment, many environmentalists insist that avoiding such a future requires alternative urban structures and processes.

Sustainability has emerged as a concept around which a comprehensive framework has developed to address a range of urban problems. It has become the dominant regulating principle in the formation of urban policy and planning theory. Deeply intertwined with the notion of sustainable development introduced by the Brundtland Commission, which stated that societies should meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, sustainability policies have come to encapsulate a wide range of urban-planning practices, from bike lanes to LEED-certified buildings and affordable housing (Whitehead 2007). While there is not a consensus about what practices and policies are "really" sustainable, it is fair to say that sustainability is presented as an ideal, where people strive for a kind of development that does not create net social, economic, or ecological losses.

Although the idea of sustainability often is used to characterize a range of economic, social, and ecological problems and processes, from public health to new technologies to tourism, that mean more than just environmental awareness, much of the growth of its popularity can be attributed to the mainstreaming of environmentalism. In a popular context, sustainability and better environmental management have become synonymous, a pairing that has often led to the erasure of social and economic concerns elsewhere articulated as part of the sustainability ideal. For instance, in the work of architect Douglas Farr,

"sustainability" simply means recognizing the importance of the environmental limits of growth and creating urban environments that provide a sustainable return on financial investments such as real estate (Farr 2008). But while it may be possible to create temporary and profitable environmental sustainability fixes for urban development, these fixes are often detrimental to social equality, similar to how some urban industrial and land-use policies, instituted to provide job opportunities and improve social welfare, had drastically negative environmental effects (Campbell 1996).

Since the early 1990s, as chapter 4 discussed, Austin's local government has attained some notoriety because of its commitment to ecological sustainability goals. The city has implemented a number of initiatives that have increasingly figured as central parts of the city's strategic planning (Lyman 1998). As the previous chapters have stressed, Austin's highly technically skilled workforce, the state government, and the University of Texas at Austin have long been recognized as distinctive assets, but increasingly the city's elites understand the city's compactness, political concern with the environment, and ecological amenities as locational advantages that can increase the competitiveness of Austin's central business district over its regional and national rivals in the struggle for investment (McCann 2007, 189). In a sense, the principles of developing an environmentally sustainable city are underwriting the investment campaign because the rationale for reorganizing the city's landscape (investing in Austin's urban core and redeveloping its downtown) is that doing so is environmentally friendly and increases Austin's competitive stature. Hence, it is increasingly apparent that a version of environmentalism has become inseparable from, compatible with, and even beneficial to the city's fortunes. Despite the fact that a more inclusive definition of sustainability often involves more than just ecological concerns, the dominant vision in Austin is organized around a specific idea of environmentalism that is informed by the political conflicts that emerged over the development of the city's western suburbs and is controlled by people who are mostly white and have accumulated significant economic and cultural capital.

In the literature on urban environmental politics, many authors point out a substantial split between "environmental sustainability" groups and what Agyeman has called "just sustainability" groups (Agyeman 2005, 39). The former tend to be more narrowly focused on environmental issues such as habitat preservation, open space, and energy consumption, while the latter promote a broader "civic environmentalism" that uses a different definition of the term "environment"—one that includes people and where they live, work, and play as well as the "physical and natural worlds" (Bullard 2007, 10). There is a core difference between these two visions. The former wants to extend the sphere of justice to include nonhuman species and seeks to create such mechanisms as regulations, incentives, and technological improvements to internalize (that is,

to more fully incorporate and account for the negative life-cycle effects of any good or service that is produced) the costs of human modifications to the natural world. In contrast, the latter in principle favors extending these concerns to nonhuman species but also conceptualizes environmental issues as a matter of civil rights; this vision explicitly ties ecological concerns to social problems and turns "environmentalism" into an issue of social justice. The problem is that the latter vision calls for internalizing the social costs of growth, which can work at cross-purposes to achieving ecological goals. In Austin these two visions of "nature" are held by people from different parts of the city, and while the split between the two has been overcome many times, for instance in addressing the impact of industrial effluent on nonwhite communities, it has been a significant source of friction, particularly in relation to policies aimed at the redevelopment of the city's downtown.

While both the "environmental" and "just" sustainability visions offer valuable contributions to thinking about how to construct alternative forms of urbanization, only a selective environmental sustainability framework has been effectively incorporated into the hegemonic vision of Austin's strategic growth plan. While many environmentalists lament that subsuming their pro-ecological ideals into the business community's progrowth agenda is a form of co-optation that has limited more radical transformations, politically it is important to consider how such a selective incorporation of environmentalism was possible. My argument is that the answer can be understood only by asking what environmentalists counted as "the environment." I will show how the present political arrangements between environmentalists and the business community were born out of a compromise stipulating that environmentalists would support the remaking of Austin's downtown if the business community supported preserving an area in the suburbs for nonhuman species. The business community thought the compromise would help boost Austin's competitive edge because preserving a section of the "pristine environment" in the suburbs would increase Austin's ability to retain and lure highly educated workers (Preston 1998). In addition, the redevelopment potential of downtown was so great that it would offset any prospective downside of limiting growth elsewhere. Environmentalists were satisfied because spatially, the agreement meant limiting development in a fragile ecosystem and promoting future growth closer to downtown rather than in the suburbs. The unstated assumption of both sides was that the transformation of downtown's physical and social environment was not an environmental problem. An invisible boundary circumscribed the limits of what was considered an environmental concern. Environmental issues focused only on internalizing the effects of urbanization on nonhuman species; environmentalists were not concerned about the externalization of the downtown redevelopment's environmental costs onto people (both homeless people and communities of color).

Austin's Two Environmentalisms

On March 31, 2010, I went to the release party for a book written by Scott Swearingen, an urban sociologist who teaches at St. Edwards University in Austin. Scott is an acquaintance, and he had given me an advance copy of his book, *Environmental City: People, Place, and the Meaning of Modern Austin*, which I had read about a year prior, so I went to congratulate him.

The event was held in a reserved section at Threadgill's, a local restaurant chain famous for its southern comfort food and live music. Located along Riverside Drive in West Austin, the restaurant is very close to where the Armadillo World Headquarters, one of Austin's most significant live music venues, once stood. The event was hosted by the Save Our Springs Alliance (SOS), which widely publicized the event. Founded in 1990 as a coalition of groups and individuals contesting a proposed development in the Barton Creek watershed, SOS's main concern continues to be the potential damage to water quality caused by urbanization and the loss of natural habitat over the Edwards Aquifer. Widely considered Austin's most powerful environmental organization, SOS has won several significant state court cases and was victorious in getting the Barton Creek salamander (*Euryce sosorum*, named after the group) listed as a federally endangered species.

The event was first and foremost a book signing, but it was also a celebration. Several attendees told me that it was a reunion of sorts for the entire environmental community, and people who had not seen each other in many years were catching up; most knew Swearingen, who was deeply involved with Austin's environmental community during the 1980s, and his book tells their story. It is a detailed case study of how disparate and nascent local neighborhood and environmental activists became a unified and strong political movement. It contains personal stories, photos, and many invaluable firsthand accounts. Theoretically indebted to Harvey Molotch's growth machine thesis, the book essentially documents the protracted struggle between environmentalists and neighborhood activists on one side, and developers and pro-developer City Council members on the other. It argues that environmentalists beat the developers by electing an environmentally friendly City Council in 1997 and, in the process, made the environment the third rail in local politics.

Most of Austin's liberal elites were present at the party. I counted two present City Council members, several former council members, and many people employed at City Hall, Austin Energy, and numerous nonprofit, progressive, primarily environmental groups. Most of the attendees were white, appeared to be middle-aged professionals, were wearing T-shirts and flip-flops or casual business attire, and were drinking alcohol; it was happy hour, and local beers were only one dollar at the bar. Lots of people were eating fried chicken and burgers,

although I would guess that many others were vegetarians or pescatarians, and the atmosphere was very convivial.

I could stay for only about an hour, enough time for a beer; unfortunately, I missed many speeches because I had to go across town to Austin's East Side for an event held by the environmental group People Organized in Defense of Earth and Her Resources (PODER). Founded at almost the same time as SOS, PODER is an environmental justice group, led mostly by women (many of whom identify as mothers), that primarily handles environmental issues facing Austin's East Side communities of color. PODER was not a part of the coalition that helped form SOS. Despite its small size, the organization is politically significant locally and recognized nationally as a noteworthy environmental justice organization; the Ford Foundation gave it a grant for its innovative work, and a nationally syndicated PBS documentary series profiled its successes. On that night, they were having their annual César E. Chávez "Sí Se Puede!" Awards Dinner at the Conley-Guerrero Senior Activity Center to recognize people who had helped them, and I was receiving an award for the work my students had done as part of a service-learning component of a geography capstone class.

Needless to say, the second party was very different from the first. While it was held in an austere community center, most people were dressed up, and the crowd was more diverse in terms of color and age. Most people were Hispanic, but there were also a significant number of African Americans and white people. I knew many attendees, but nobody was present from the City Council or Austin's white political and social establishment, although one woman there to receive an award had been at Swearingen's book signing. The people being honored were, for the most part, not college professors or urban professionals but people from the community that PODER serves in East Austin. They were clerical workers, teachers, and community activists. Many were teenagers and college students who had done work with PODER. For dinner, we had a choice of vegetarian or nonvegetarian tamales and beans, as well as chips, two kinds of salsa, and iced tea or water; there was no alcohol. Everything was homemade, and PODER's staff and volunteers had decorated all the tables.

The two events had different purposes; the former was a celebration of the accomplishment of an important figure in Austin's environmental community, and the latter was a dinner of appreciation for those who had helped an environmental organization. I think it is significant that the people I spoke to at the PODER dinner and Swearingen's book signing were largely unaware that the other event was happening. Perhaps each group had just failed to inform the other, but I would note that PODER is not mentioned once in Swearingen's history of Austin's environmental movement (an omission that, Swearingen claims, was due to "a matter of space") (Ankrum 2010a). Thus it would seem possible to tell the story of Austin's environmental movement without reference to PODER

but impossible not to mention SOS; in the same way it is possible to have an SOS party for the environmental community without a large presence from PODER. I believe this contrast suggests that for a number of reasons, PODER and its constituencies remain largely outside the vision of the city's official environmental establishment, which, in Austin, means outside the inner circle of the city's liberal elites (Yznaga 2010). Not all people are blind to this omission, and I do not want to overstate the conflict; the two constituencies have often worked together (for instance, during the Tank Farm removal and SOS campaigns, which I will discuss later). Yet the astigmatism, I would argue, largely remains intact, and as a result, what counts as an environmental concern, *a fortiori* as a liberal concern, is decided by certain kinds of people—namely educated white people who live in western Austin—and some "environmental" concerns, especially criticisms of the contemporary redevelopment of downtown, might be absent from the concerns of or even unintelligible to Austin's liberals. The lacunae in Swearingen's book and the groups' unawareness of the other's celebrations show the deep disconnect that exists between these two environmentalisms. Although their joint concern for the preservation of the "natural environment" has often unified the two groups around particular issues—overriding the cultural, class, and ethnic divisions that could have pulled them apart—the more intractable issue is the tension that arises from their different analyses of what counts as an environmental problem.

Urban Sprawl, Austin's Environmental Community, and Smart Growth Initiatives

While Austin had grown at a steady pace since the 1950s, since the 1980s its rate of growth has been astonishing. The region's population has more than doubled since the 1990s and is projected to grow even faster in the next twenty years (Steiner 2008). As in other Sunbelt cities, the steady rise in population is due mainly to immigration rather than natural increases, and it is driven by the development of the region's economy. Moreover, the total urbanized area in the region has also expanded at a phenomenal pace over the last thirty years, in part because many newly arriving residents have settled in recently built-out suburban areas or in burgeoning satellite cities that surround Austin's older neighborhoods. As in previous years, these spatial patterns of growth have been largely influenced by three interrelated factors: the prospecting of private developers in the nonurbanized areas; the support of some City Council members; and the state government's construction of highways.

As chapter 4 discussed in detail, a strong environmental movement has resisted the sprawling patterns of urban growth in Austin. In the mid-1980s, Austin's City Council had become clearly divided between two dominant political factions, suburban developers and environmentalists, and there was very little

agreement about the future direction of city's growth. Despite efforts by the business community, Austin's environmental movement continued to grow in strength and even had some substantial victories. For example, in 1991 environmentalists ran a successful referendum campaign for the adoption of a local water-quality ordinance; the effort received strong support across Austin and was passed by the electorate by a decisive margin (Swearingen 2010).

By the late 1990s, the two factions were beginning to arrive at a compromise that came into being after the election of the "Green Council" in 1997, a moment that is seen by environmentalists as the high-water mark of their political influence. Significantly, it is also the critical turning point in the formation of a new relationship between environmentalists and the business community—a relationship that was embodied in the leadership of the then newly elected mayor, Kirk Watson. Watson offered a third-way platform of "Smart Growth" based on the three pillars of economic prosperity, ecological preservation, and social equality that echoed President Clinton's Council on Sustainable Development, which stated: "Our vision is of a life-sustaining Earth. We are committed to the achievement of a dignified, peaceful, and equitable existence. A sustainable United States will have a growing economy that provides equitable opportunities for satisfying livelihoods and a safe, healthy, high quality of life for current and future generations. Our nation will protect its environment, its natural resource base, and the functions and viability of natural systems on which all life depends" (President's Council on Sustainable Development 1996). Armed with the language of Smart Growth, Watson, known to be an especially deft negotiator, began to forge a way forward and brought the two competing factions to the table.

The essence of the compromise was to refashion an abandoned comprehensive master plan from the 1980s that called for steering growth off the Edwards Plateau and closer to the city's central business district. Bill Bunch, a leader of SOS, noted:

> Keep this area [pointing on a map at the Hill Country] as low density and protected as we can by steering our more intensive urban development to the east and downstream of the Edwards aquifer and along [what the 1979 comprehensive plan called] the preferred growth corridor. [This recommendation from that plan] then was sort of restyled during the green Watson council as the desired development zone. . . . Build here and preserve here [pointing to the western and eastern areas of the map]. This is your water supply to support your cities. . . . Preserve this, water and unbelievable biodiversity that still existed, species that live here and nowhere else in the world. Build here, this was the Blackland prairie mostly, it had already been denuded of its biodiversity by the plow and it is suitable for building. (Bunch 2008)

Following a similar vision, under Watson the City Council released a map that divided the city into three different development zones: a drinking water zone, an urban desired development zone, and a desired development zone

(Clark-Madison 1998). The idea was that development in most of west Austin, particularly the areas over the Edwards Aquifer, should be limited because of its potential impact on water, and that the City Council should promote infill and higher densities in the desired development zones, particularly the urban desired development zone, which covered virtually the entire eastern section of the city close to the central business district.

These designations were not codified into city's zoning regulations and therefore not enforceable as a matter of law, so instead City Council had to give incentives to developers to support the plan's goals (McCann 2003, 168). In 1997, three bonds that contained three elements of Austin's Smart Growth plan were proposed in one package, and their passage required the support of a diverse group of stakeholders. The first bond supported social equity and would allocate $10 million for remediating flooding risk along Walnut Creek in the Crystalbrook neighborhood (a more modestly resourced community in East Austin that was primarily home to African Americans). The second bond was designed to generate economic growth. It would raise the city's hotel room tax to 15 percent to finance an enlargement of the Austin Convention Center. In addition, these funds would be used to build a flood-diversion tunnel along Waller Creek that would remove a large portion of valuable land in the central business district from the floodplain and make it available for redevelopment. The final bond, intended to appease environmentalists, authorized raising $65 million from a water utility surcharge to buy 15,000 acres of undeveloped land in Austin's western suburbs. All the bonds passed, in part because of the strong support they received from the principal institutions and persons in both the business and environmental communities (Lindell 1998).

Austin's East Side and PODER's Challenge to Smart Growth

The redevelopment of Austin's central business district was largely interpreted as positive for both the environmental and business communities. "In the late 1990s, we were sort of more cooperating," Bill Bunch recalled, "where downtown was wanting to sell itself more and we were like, 'Yeah absolutely.' We are all for that" (Bunch 2008). The main vehicle for the promotion of downtown was a private-public partnership mainly consisting of a coalition of downtown land and business owners known as the Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA), which was financed by a special TIF (tax increment financing, using forecast tax gains to subsidize present-day improvements) on downtown real estate. The organization was designed to be "downtown's advocate," and the idea for creating it came from an investigation undertaken by the city, lobbied by the Chamber of Commerce, which had assessed the potential for redeveloping downtown to help it "regain its position as the economic hub of the city." The report noted,

"Downtown, however, is no longer perceived solely as a center of commerce but must also incorporate culture, entertainment, tourism and residential neighborhoods to maximize its chances for prosperity" (City of Austin 1992).

The changes that were being discussed by the DAA and the local government were significantly transforming the role of the city's downtown, which, for much of the twentieth century, had been a buffer zone between Austin's east and west communities. Austin had become more and more spatially segregated by race during the twentieth century (see chapter 6), with the majority of African Americans and Hispanics concentrated in neighborhoods just east of the city's central business district and wealthier whites to the west and north, a result of a combination of private and public forces. Located along the north bank of the Colorado River, east Austin contained some of the oldest neighborhoods in the city. As newer neighborhoods were built in other parts of the city during the 1920s and 1930s, price was an important impediment to residential mobility, but racially restrictive covenants in these newly developed areas also limited housing opportunities for nonwhites. At the same time, the municipal corporation imposed industrial and residential zoning standards and financed infrastructural improvements such as the development of a sewage system, water lines, parks, and schools that substantially altered the city's morphology. These measures also had a dramatic effect on racial and class settlement patterns, in part because much of east Austin's residential communities were zoned "miscellaneous or colored" and not "white residential," which subsequently left these communities open to industrial and commercial development that had been restricted in other, whiter parts of the city (City of Austin 1955). Additionally, when the local government made infrastructural improvements intended to benefit nonwhite minorities, such as building a school or hooking up electricity to a private residence, it would do so only for minorities living in east Austin and not for nonwhite communities in other parts of the city.

While for much of the 1980s environmentalism had developed primarily as a "west Austin" concern, in 1991, around the time SOS was formed, a group of people formed People Organized in Defense of the Earth and Her Resources in response to very different kinds of environmental stresses (Wallace 1994). Susana Almanza recalled how PODER was not always considered a part of the environmental community:

> I can tell you when we first started working on the issues in our community and the environmental people would actually say they did not think that [the construction of high technology facilities in east Austin] was an environmental issue because basically at that time it was only nature kind that they were looking at—the water, the air, the animals—so people did not really figure into the environment. Their definition was nature kind and our definition was nature kind and humankind that you could not separate. . . . So we were saying, "No these are environmental issues

> because you impacted a community by building these facilities and you are using up this money [as a subsidy to spur development]. That is an environmental issue and you are impacting these people." The endangered part, we said, instead of the yellow cheeked warbler, we have people of color who are endangered. So if you want to look at endangered species we have people who are very endangered because of where we live and proximity to [the industrial development]. It took some education to get people to understand that these issues were environmental issues and to expand their scope of the environment to environmental justice issues. (Almanza 2010)

PODER's efforts began with a focus on the potential environmental and community effects of the rapid industrial development in the early 1990s of a corridor in East Austin, which contained a number of factories of high technology firms. Initially, the group was agitated about the local government's use of tax incentives to bring businesses that had minimal positive impact on the surrounding community in terms of employment. Moreover, toxic waste and heavy metal contamination were particular concerns. Chemical leaks and industrial accidents in 1982 and 1984 at Austin's Motorola plant, located in this corridor, had exposed these potential risks (Mora 1983; Cox and Banta 1984). Yet as PODER and its allies noted, nearly all the manufacturing plants of high-technology firms (and their associated risks) were located in East Austin around high concentrations of nonwhite minorities, while their research and management facilities were located elsewhere in the city (Hartenberger, Tufekci, and Davis 2012, 76–77). Furthermore, the potential long-term risks from toxic pollutants to these surrounding communities had never been explored, despite the fact that public EPA documents showed that more than two-thirds of the toxic pollution in these areas of Austin came from Motorola's and AMD's facilities (Citizen Fund 1990). Animated by these issues, in the 1990s PODER led a coalition of groups in a campaign that successfully forced Sematech to halt the use of some toxic chemicals in its East Austin production facility because of their potential health risks to the surrounding communities (Smith 1992; Mitchell 1993; Byster and Smith 2006).

PODER's local and national notoriety came later as the result of a successful campaign to have a tank farm, owned and operated by six major oil companies, relocated from East Austin (Scheibal 2002). In 1991 Mobil proposed expanding their facility, and PODER, along with community allies in both East and West Austin, organized to block the expansion. Local residents had long complained about the health and environmental impacts of these oil facilities—asthma rates in the surrounding area were very high—and testing revealed that the soil and water around the tank farm were highly polluted. After a long and protracted fight, the community finally signed agreements with all of the companies to move, and an environmental remediation fund and plan were established to clean up the site.

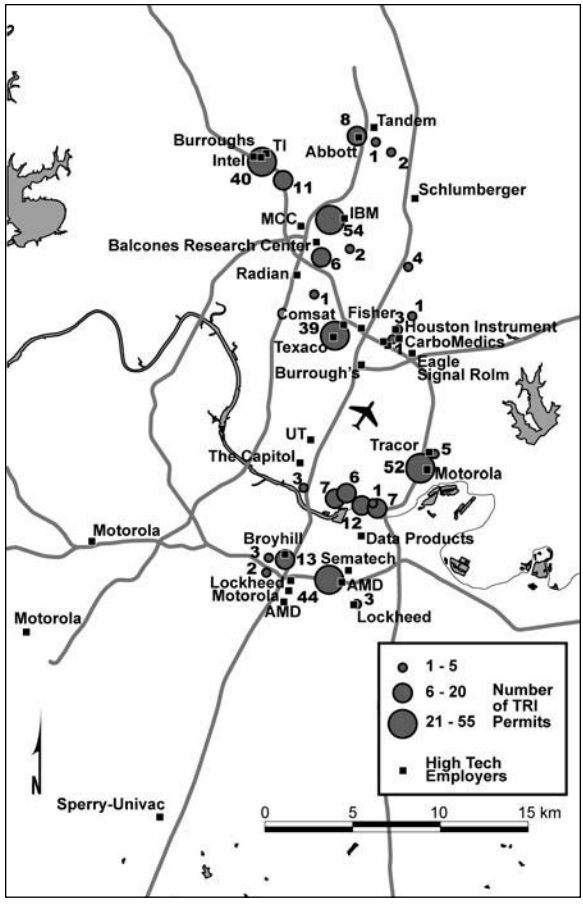

FIGURE 10.
The Number of Toxic Release Inventory Permits and the Location of High-Technology Employers in Austin, 1987–1990. Based on map of Toxic Release Inventory Data and High-Technology Firms provided by M. Anwar Sounny-Slitine.

PODER's ability to mobilize people in their community during the 1990s mirrored the growing significance of the idea of environmental justice at a national level. "Environmental justice" as a movement had gained widespread recognition during the 1980s, especially after the 1982 protests over a PCB landfill in Warren, North Carolina, turned violent and projected the movement onto the national stage (Chiro 1998, 108–113). One significant outcome of these protests was a federally funded study that showed a spatial correlation between toxic waste sites and racial and economic status through the southern United States. A more robust social movement really galvanized, however, in the 1990s, after the 1991 People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, when hundreds of organizations met and adopted the "principles of environmental justice." Often touted as "the most important single event in the movement's history," the summit provided a forum to connect many organizations that had been working on similar issues in their local communities (Bullard and Johnson 2000,

TABLE 1. Central East Austin decadal demographic data by race and census tract, 1980–2010

Neighborhood (Census tract)	1980			1990			2000			2010		
	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic Black	Hispanic
S. Upper Boggy Creek (4.02)	676	1,995	42	648	1,255	532	1,005	1,103	757	1,337	599	552
N. Govalle (8.01)	201	263	1,349	88	282	1,330	119	221	1,494	249	171	1,062
Rosewood (8.02)	27	3,135	477	108	1,960	659	116	1,798	1,328	535	1,200	1,283
Chestnut (8.03)	168	2,366	273	155	1,471	369	250	1,093	971	1,037	611	691
N. Central East Austin (8.04)	84	2,339	412	69	1,546	876	142	1,107	1,193	577	670	993
S. Central East Austin (9.01)	41	1,060	1,264	67	948	868	152	622	1,013	628	475	862
N. Cesar Chavez (9.02)	304	398	5,273	265	193	4,694	218	404	4,673	1,008	409	3,902
S. Cesar Chavez (10)	784	56	4,527	559	59	3,929	630	87	3,872	1,092	87	2,395
TOTAL	2,285	11,612	13,995	1,959	7,714	13,257	2,632	6,435	15,301	6,463	4,222	11,740

Source: Data for census tracts from Neighborhood change database, using 2010 tract boundaries.

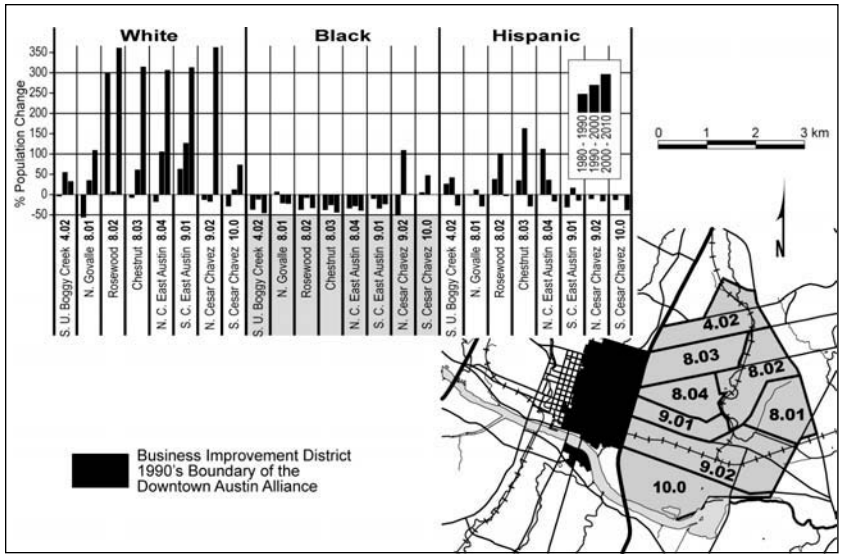

FIGURE 11. Central East Austin Decadal Rate of Demographic Change by Race and Census Tract, 1980–2010.

556). Additionally, federal and state governments enacted laws, the most famous being President Clinton's "Environmental Justice" executive order 12898, which required every federal agency to "make achieving environmental justice a part of its mission" (Clinton 1994; Cutter 1995, 113–114; Rast 2006, 253–254).

Responding to this federal concern and local pressure, in 1997 the city of Austin conducted a study to examine housing and industrial uses in East Austin. The results showed that East Austin had the greatest proportion of land zoned industrial in the city and that many houses were located on land zoned for commercial and industrial uses and near industrial facilities. The findings revealed the underlying environmental racism that resulted from relying on city zoning rules and plans that were developed in 1931, when it was a widely accepted idea to "concentrate what white planners felt were the unpleasant parts of the community—people of color and industry" (Greenberger 1997a). The report did not mention the long-term health effects of having generations of people living so close to human-made environmental hazards such as chemical effluent or industrial plant emissions, a point that PODER had been making, but the study was used by PODER and other groups to successfully lobby the City Council to change the zoning in the area to be more compatible with residential uses in future developments.

Other private and public forces were also working to change land-use patterns in East Austin. Private housing developers were quick to capitalize on East Austin's relatively inexpensive land prices and proximity to the city's central business district, and more and more relatively wealthy people (many of whom

were white) began to buy houses and renovate them, resulting in the very rapid gentrification of some areas. This trend was particularly stark in central East Austin and was in significant contrast to the 1980s, when central East Austin neighborhoods were estimated to have lost about 18 percent of their population, while Austin's population as a whole increased by over 35 percent (Wilson, Rhodes, and Glickman 2007, 11). In fact, since the 1980s, in most census tracts in central East Austin, the African American population has declined, and while the Hispanic population grew in some areas in the 1990s, in the twenty-first century it too has fallen. In contrast, between 1990 and 2000, the white population in nearly all of the area's census tracts grew between about 7 percent and about 130 percent. (Between 2000 and 2010, this trend was starker, as the white population in the same areas grew by between approximately 30 percent and 360 percent.) The white share of central East Austin's population rose from about 8 percent in 1990 to approximately 11 percent in 2000 to almost 30 percent in 2010, while over the same period the African American share fell from about 34 percent in 1990 to about 19 percent in 2010; the Hispanic population's share declined slightly, from about 57 percent to 52 percent.

The city's Smart Growth initiatives indirectly supported this demographic shift by encouraging these new residential developments: almost the entirety of East Austin close to downtown was in the desired development zones. Drawing on the work of other environmental justice groups, PODER argued that the city was being reorganized using environmental principles that excluded communities of color (Almanza, Herrera, and Almanza 2003). Susana Almanza said:

> We didn't know what was happening [regarding the Watson's Council's plans to create Desirable Development Zones]. . . . As a matter of fact we stepped into it by accident because we were supposed to be at City Hall for a meeting and we kind of went into the wrong room and saw a big map about the Desirable Development Zones. That map showed moving everything east in Austin. We were like, "What's going on with this?" We were not at the table at the beginning. . . . We did not find out until it was just about a done deal. We went to City Hall to talk about it and say we were not in agreement with the way this was happening because it was moving industry further into East Austin. . . . We were very much against the whole Smart Growth movement because the Smart Growth movement was, to us, really the change of language from when they came in with the revitalization. . . . When they revitalized, that meant getting rid of us, making new communities, and we were not going to be in those communities. (Almanza 2010)

The frustration among long-term residents of the area toward Smart Growth was intense, and no Hispanic organization on the East Side came out in support of the Smart Growth bond initiatives; one group, El Concilio, vociferously opposed it (Leon 2010; Wear 1998). While Austin's environmentalists considered the Tank Farm and the concentration of industrial zoning in East Austin en-

vironmental issues, they did not believe the same about gentrification and the larger embourgeoisement of the area. Comments like the one made by longtime activist Paul Hernandez that the "SMART" in Smart Growth stood for "Send Minorities Across the River Today" meant nothing to environmentalists because they considered the transformation of East Austin's demographics and physical landscape to be social, not environmental, problems and part of the "natural" evolution of the city (Gandara 2002).

PODER's criticism of the Smart Growth plan was partly justified because while the plan offered a comprehensive vision for future growth, it largely ignored how asymmetrical power relations between whites and nonwhites had shaped the city's past growth. Part of the privilege of being white in Austin's past had been the ability to choose where you lived. Minorities, meanwhile, had nearly always been acted upon by political and economic forces and were routinely told (without much say in the matter) that their neighborhoods needed to be improved. For this reason, Hispanic activists, despite the potential upside and novelty of the Smart Growth plan, were able to criticize it as just another iteration in a longer historical process, like the urban renewal programs discussed in chapter 2, where communities of color had been pushed around in the city. To the extent that the plan offered a utopian sustainable vision for the future, it did so only by ignoring the dystopian history of racism and underdevelopment that, ironically, had resulted in East Austin's becoming a potential Desirable Development Zone.

In 2003, the Austin City Council officially abandoned its Smart Growth platform, in part because of the financial failure of several subsidized development projects in the central business district (Osborne and Scheibal 2003; Barna 2002). However, it was replaced with a new set of rules that looked very similar. The City Council still tried to provide incentives for downtown revitalization, but the plans were slightly modified to incorporate the principles of New Urbanism and its concern for affordability (Scheibal 2005). Needless to say, the basic outlines of the Smart Growth initiatives continued, and they continue to affect development throughout Austin and particularly East Austin, where more and more private housing and mixed-used developments have sprouted up, leading to a wholesale transformation of the physical environment and fundamentally altering the demographics of the area. Despite the rapidness of these changes, Austin's East Side continues to be distinguished by strong and vibrant communities of color, but how long these communities will survive becomes less clear every day. What is clear is that the city's planners are wagering that the environmental and economic benefits resulting from the redevelopment of the area—nearly every new luxury housing project touts the ecological benefits of being near Austin's downtown—are much greater than any potential social or economic value the longstanding forms of cultural difference could offer to the city's long-term competitiveness.

Conclusion

PODER's ability to attract the support of Austin's liberal elites had a lot to do with the organization's tactical use of the term "environment." In Austin, I have argued, environmentalism is the dominant ideology held by the liberal establishment, which for the last forty years has been the main oppositional force to the business community's control in local governance. Environmental justice organizations throughout the United States have been very effective at showing how environmental racism has influenced urban development by building on the power of pre-existing civil rights coalitions that were concerned primarily with racial equity. In contrast, PODER's success at addressing the problems of human-produced hazards, the results of past industrial zoning and racism, was due mainly to their ability to translate the issue from a social problem into an environmental problem, subsequently enabling them to win wide support across the environmental, and broader liberal, community. However, the group and its supporters have been largely unable to replicate this victory in their criticisms of gentrification and transformational developments to the east of the central business district because they have failed to make them intelligible environmental issues. So while this study points toward an important conjunction between environmental sensibilities and gentrification, or free-market solutions to neighborhood revitalization and upgrading, it also suggests that part of the problem (and perhaps the solution) concerns the manner in which environmentalists circumscribe what types of problems are environmental problems.

More than a decade ago, David Harvey lamented the inability and unwillingness of many environmentalists to effectively understand urban processes and incorporate social problems in their criticisms of urbanization; he called this failure "pernicious." But he still noted that the "integration of the urbanization question into the environmental-ecological question is a *sine qua non* for the twenty-first century" (Harvey 1996, 429). Unfortunately, the literature and policy formulations on urban sustainability and Smart Growth largely replicate the impasse found in Austin: urban and social concerns cannot be rendered as ecological and environmental problems. Figuring out forms of translation will help solve this problem, although it is not just an issue of translation: sometimes it is easy to avoid learning a new language when you do not need to learn it in order to survive, or when not knowing it makes it easier to not hear who is speaking. To confront the range of urban problems, we need to learn how to speak and listen effectively to the variety of ways in which the environment is described and understood. In this instance, it would require understanding how asymmetrical power relations, in both the present and the past, continually influence how and what kinds of "environmental" issues are addressed. Perhaps learning new ways of translating would help bring about the possibility for the creation of a more

attentive "ecology of urbanization," one born from the melding of the environmental justice movement with mainstream environmentalism.

Yet if Harvey is correct, then thinking about the ways these two groups of environmentalists have worked together in Austin suggests it is possible to find integrated solutions. Many of Austin's liberal elites, including members of the City Council, are supportive of PODER's demands and are aware of the racial, class, and ethnic tensions that surround the push toward creating a more environmentally sensitive form of urbanization. Many predominantly white groups from Austin's West Side do take into account the concerns of PODER and other minority organizations, and while friction remains, these organizations argue that preserving ethnically diverse, affordable, and livable communities is necessary for engineering a more sustainable city.

Finding ways to achieve a win-win-win balancing of economic, environmental, and social concerns has been presented as the main problem in the struggle to create more sustainable cites. However, the main debates in Austin took place primarily between those who had an economic-environmental interpretation of urban sustainability and those who had an environmental-social one. The tensions between these two visions have become particularly stark because the business community has effectively appropriated a vision of environmentalism that does not treat the transformation of the urban environment as an environmental problem. Environmentalists need to challenge this selective definition of environmentalism, which permits a bifurcation of the movement, and instead offer a more expansive, more comprehensive definition that includes the urban environment. As long as social and ecological concerns are treated as distinct problems that have distinct solutions, rather than coconstitutive of a socioecological urbanization process, it will be possible to understand the transformation of the urban environment as something other than an environmental matter, and some environmentalists will continue to believe that a healthy approach to the environment is possible without a firm commitment to social justice.

CHAPTER 6

What Is Past Is Prologue

Urban Governance, Comprehensive Planning, and Political Reform

> The horizon open to the future, which is determined by expectations in the present, guides our access to the past. Inasmuch as we appropriate past experiences with an orientation to the future, the authentic present is preserved as the locus of continuing tradition and of innovation at once; the one is not possible without the other, and both merge into the objectivity proper to a context of effective history.
>
> **Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures***

> As Jackson's second term came to a close, political arrangements in the city remained somewhat unsettled. Jackson had been unable to convert his electoral base into a progressive governing coalition. The business elite had too many strategic alliances to be pushed aside.
>
> **Clarence Stone, *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946–1988***

For most of the twentieth century and beyond, major planning and political reform efforts in Austin have been interdependent. The major reorganizations of the local government in 1926 and 1951 were accompanied by new master planning endeavors, while the failure of the city's comprehensive planning efforts from 1977 to 2011 were concurrent with a series of unsuccessful attempts to alter the at-large system of representation on Austin's City Council. In 2012, this tendency for confluence appeared again: Austin's City Council adopted a new comprehensive plan in June, and in November the city's electorate overwhelmingly supported changing from an at-large council-mayor-manager system to a single-district council-mayor-manager system.

One crucial reason for the success of both of these recent initiatives was the explicit or tacit support (or nonopposition) of key organizations from the business community, and I would argue that this reveals an enduring quality about urban governance in Austin: when the business community's leading organizations (chiefly the Chamber of Commerce) support a major reform in the city it is more viable, and when they do not it tends to languish. While this is not a

novel observation, I think it suggests that the business community's principal representatives still have much more sway in Austin's governance than other contemporary accounts might indicate (Long 2010; Moore 2007; Straubhaar et al. 2012; Swearingen 2010). Does my contention imply that none of City Hall's agenda is achieved without the support of the city's leading business groups? No. But I think that the history of urban governance in Austin indicates that it can be much harder to implement broad reforms or programs without the support of the business community's most important associations.

Of course, this problem has preoccupied many scholars concerned with the political economy of cities: how, in democratic societies, can we account for the asymmetrical influence the business community's principal associations have in urban governance, especially when the priorities of a ruling urban coalition do not correspond with the preferences of the business community's chief organs? One quite original answer comes from regime theorists, particularly Clarence Stone. For Stone the ability of an urban coalition to formulate and implement its agenda—to govern—results from the strength of the "informal arrangements by which public bodies and private interests function together in order to be able to make and carry out governing decisions" (Stone 1989, 6). Importantly, private interests, in this context, include groups that represent any politically interested party—such as labor unions, environmentalists, historic preservationists, and ethnic groups—and not just business interests. Nevertheless, the business community's leading organizations and their development priorities often become the central concern of city governments. This happens not because a cabal of business elites coerces City Hall but because they control a much larger stock of resources that can be brought to the table and used, in conjunction with the local government, to forge cooperative relationships across institutional boundaries, which might otherwise impede working among groups, toward a concerted end.

Although an urban coalition may be elected that controls the local government's formal machinery, it may fail to deliver on its priorities—fail to govern effectively—because the coalition has been unable to mobilize and coordinate available resources for a concerted end and to overcome internal divisions and external opposition. Not being able to govern effectively does not mean that nothing happens; in Austin, for instance, as this chapter shows, many attempts were made to reform the city's governance and refashion its urban form, and many programs and policies were enacted that had significant and long-lasting impact on the city. It seems, though, that without sufficient power to coordinate informally and formally with many communities of interest, to engage and harness their resources toward joint goals, a governing coalition's capacity to realize its central priorities will be frustrated, limited, or undermined.

The problem explored in this chapter is how reforms to formal election systems for local government went hand in hand with comprehensive planning initiatives. A considerable body of literature has focused on the legal and po-

Year Proposed	Name of Plan	If Adopted	Electorate Support for Bonding Priorities
1928	Koch and Fowler	Yes	Yes
1955	Austin Plan	No	Yes
1961	Austin Development Plan	Yes	Yes
1979	Austin Tomorrow	Yes	No
1987	Austinplan	No	N/A
1997	Neighbourhood Planning	Yes	Yes
2012	Imagine Austin	Yes	Unknown

FIGURE 12. Master Planning and Bonding Priorities in Austin, 1928–2010.

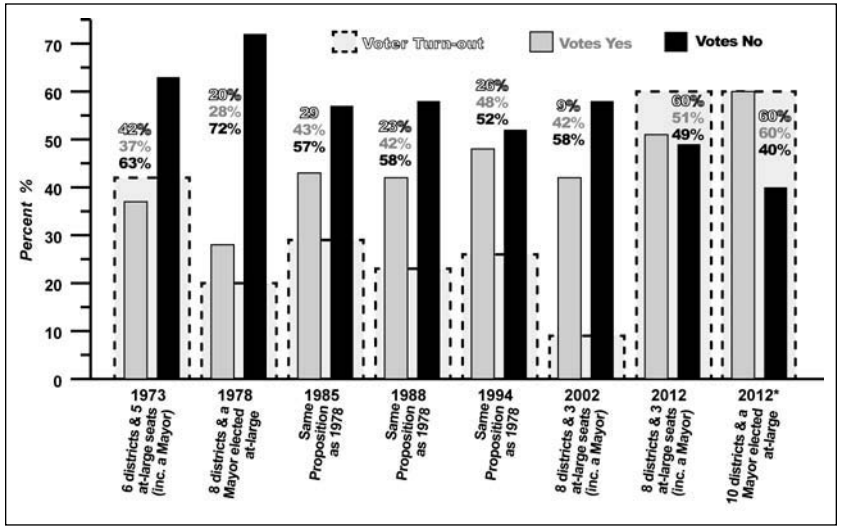

FIGURE 13. Attempts to Alter Austin's Electoral At-Large System, 1973–2012.

litical implications, especially for disenfranchising nonwhite communities, of the various election systems used by local authorities in Texas (Brischetto et al. 1994; Davidson 1992; Davidson and Korbel 1981). Moreover, the scholarship on comprehensive plans shows that planning is always a political act; it engages the formal institutions of government and reflects the ideals and interests of a large range of private interest groups (Hoch 2007; Ryan 2011). Yet there is sur-

prisingly little discussion about how changing governing coalitions and institutional reforms to local government election systems affect the priorities set forth in comprehensive plans. This oversight is all the more unexpected given that there is a fairly developed literature about how official reforms in municipal representation at the start of the twentieth century affected the priorities set forth in comprehensive plans (Bridges 1997; Brownell 1975; Tindall 1967; Tretter 2013). Yet little has been made of how these two processes ran together at the twilight of the twentieth century and the dawn of the twenty-first, when there were both a push to unwind Progressive-era municipal reforms of election systems and significant attempts by cities to develop new comprehensive plans around the goals of urban sustainability.

In this chapter, I argue that an underlying system of power, which influences the structures of urban governance in Austin, can be revealed by exploring the different efforts at changing its system of municipal representation and in the development of its comprehensive plans. What this history shows is that the business community's principal organizations had an unusually strong role in influencing whether certain priorities were implemented by the city's government and adopted by the electorate. While coalitions not endorsed by the business community's leading associations have, at various times, controlled the local government's formal levers of power, without the support of the business community's chief institutions, they were not able to deliver on their major priorities.

Furthermore, I will show that by looking at the past we can see how significant the structure of Austin's system for electing local government officials is for controlling the city's urban agenda. In the 1920s and 1950s, City Council reforms were crucial to how comprehensive plans developed and set the priorities for urban development that were supported by bond packages. Moreover, the limited success of urban coalitions in implementing large parts of their reform agenda from the 1970s to the 1990s shows how interdependent the city's various electoral systems and governing capacity have been. In fact, I will go so far as to suggest that liberal reformers' failure during that time to maintain a governing coalition on the City Council and to enact comprehensive planning reforms was premised on their inability to abolish the at-large system. Had such an effort been successful, their ruling position would have been strengthened and one perpetual division that ultimately helped undermine the strength of this coalition, namely a racial or ethnic division, may have been overcome. Today, as Austin implements both significant municipal reform and comprehensive planning, it is worth looking at how both were accomplished because of the support of the business community's leading organizations and how institutional reforms may be reflected in the priorities that can be fulfilled under the direction of the new comprehensive plan.

Imagining Austin's Future: Better Representation, Better Planning

On November 6, 2012, after nearly forty years of attempts, Austin's electorate overwhelmingly approved a ballot measure to abolish the city's at-large council member system and replace it with a system of single-member districts. The reform had been supported by the city's nonwhite minorities and neighborhood associations for decades, and in 2012 the primary push came from a diverse coalition that was strongly supported by the Hispanic community and neighborhood activists, from both central and suburban areas. These proponents argued that the City Council was largely made up of people who lived in selected neighborhoods, mainly those in Central West Austin, and that they therefore represented only the interests of those neighborhoods (Austinites for Geographical Representation 2012a).

FIGURE 14.
Percent of Ballots Cast in Favor of 8–2–1 Proposition by Precinct. Based on map provided by Ryan Robertson, City of Austin Demographer.

FIGURE 15.
Percent of Ballots Cast in Favor of 10–1 Proposition by Precinct. Based on map provided by Ryan Robertson, City of Austin Demographer.

One notable shift over the years was weakening opposition to this political reform from the business community's principal organizations. For nearly three decades the business community had formed an abiding opposition to this reform, but during the unsuccessful attempt to adopt a single-member district system in 2002 both the Chamber of Commerce and the Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA) changed their position (Clark-Madison 2002). In 2012, business groups took a much more aggressive stance in their support of this political reform and helped finance the campaigns that supported the ballot propositions. Granted, there were two proposals offered in 2012: "8–2–1" and "10–1." The first proposed creating eight single-member districts, two at-large council seats, and an at-large mayor and had much stronger support from the business community; the campaign that supported this proposal was primarily funded by RECA and a local property developer known as FM Properties (formerly Stratus) (Aus-

tin Community for Change 2012). The second proposal supported the formation of ten single-member districts and one at-large mayor, and it had a much broader coalition of support, including significant financial backing from the Texas Association of Builders and the Austin Home Builders Association (HBA) (Martin 2012; Austinites for Geographic Representation 2013; Austinites for Geographical Representation 2012b). While the Chamber of Commerce took no formal position on either proposal, its chairperson did endorse the general idea of some kind of electoral reform in principle (Fontenot 2012). In the end, 10–1 garnered more votes, so it is the system that was implemented, but if the two proposals are taken together to be part of the same reform effort, then it shows that the business community displayed strong support in 2012 for the proposed reform.

In contrast, a belt of neighborhoods in Central West Austin, where in the past there had been significant support for similar reform efforts, was the area of its strongest opposition in 2012. It was telling that the West Austin Democrats, one of this area's more important advocacy groups, was one of the few political associations that publicly opposed both of the 2012 redistricting efforts (Sadun 2012). Certainly Central West Austin is wealthier and whiter than other areas (although not the wealthiest or the whitest in Austin), and, as was mentioned before, a disproportionately large number of City Council members and mayors since the 1970s have come from this area. However, what might be as significant is the relationship of these neighborhoods to Austin's mainstream environmental community. Over the last forty years, many people from these neighborhoods formed the core constituency in the mainstream environmental community, and this community was very concerned about the implications of this political reform on their political power and, especially, their ability to influence the future priorities of the City Council (Long 2014). This point was made, for instance, by political consultant Marc Yznaga, who suggested that there would be a better chance of forming a more probusiness (by which he meant antienvironmental) coalition on the City Council in a single-member district system because numerous suburban and more conservative areas had been annexed and incorporated into the political jurisdiction of the City of Austin over the last three decades (Yznaga 2013). According to Yznaga, single-member districts, while supporting minority constituencies within the city's limits, would also increase the clout of these suburban voters and dilute the power of the more progressive (more environmentally concerned) inner-city neighborhoods.

The same year Austin's electorate voted to change the city's charter, the City Council adopted the Imagine Austin comprehensive plan. The final plan was the result of a massive two-year "collaborative planning" effort guided by the national design and planning firm Wallace, Roberts, and Todd. It involved over eighteen thousand public participation inputs, which included a variety of public meetings, events, and forums; several internet surveys; and hundreds of do-it-yourself "meetings in a box." There were also significant contributions

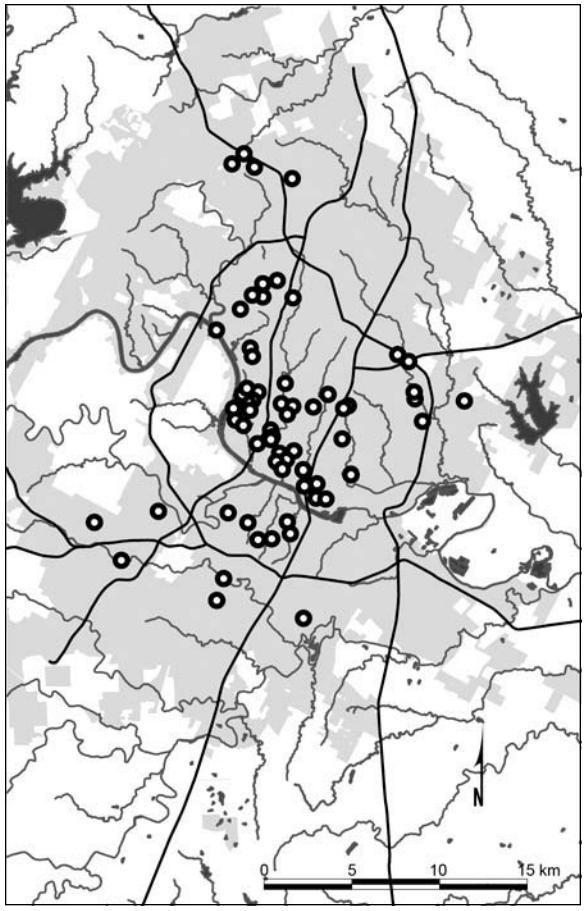

FIGURE 16.
Austin City Council Members' Residences 1971–2010. Based on map created by Ken Martin at the Austin Bulldog, 2011.

from private meetings with fifty-five stakeholder groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, RECA, and the Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC) (City of Austin 2012). While the comments from the public inputs were significant, the basic outlines of the planning effort and its vision were most strongly shaped by the Citizen's Advisory Task Force and by two other formally appointed working groups, the Comprehensive Plan Committee of the Planning Commission and the Comprehensive Planning and Transportation Subcommittee of the City Council (City of Austin 2012).

To a large extent the 2012 plan reflected and codified the dominant New Urbanist vision that had been pursued in the city's planning efforts over the previous two decades (Barna 2002). These priorities were developed in various initiatives and programs of different departments within the city's government such as the Smart Growth Initiative (1998), the 2035 Sustainable City Initiative (2006), and the Strategic Mobility Plan (2009) (Gregor 2010). The planning vi-

sion had also been influenced by the findings and plans of other regional organizations, most notably the Capital Area Metro Regional Coordination Plan for the Capital Area (2006) and the Envision Central Texas Greenprint for Growth (2009). Moreover, to fulfill this New Urbanist vision, Austin's government had modified its land-use codes, providing selective improvements to its infrastructure, and had granted some financial incentives to developers (Swearingen 2010; Barna 2002).

Nevertheless, the Imagine Austin Plan also seems to have been a successful effort in part because of the support or nonopposition, after nearly three decades of unyielding hostility, from the principal organizations representing the business community. The Chamber of Commerce made no formal statements, but public comments by RECA and HBA, while critical of aspects of Imagine Austin, generally endorsed its priorities. In particular, both groups strongly supported the proposal to rewrite the existing land-use code to help promote density in existing neighborhoods, although both suggested that more growth should be planned for in Austin's suburbs. Moreover, while both groups were critical of the plan's transportation priorities—both wanted more investment in roads—neither objected to a greater commitment to mass transit and the creation of more mobility choices (Home Builders Association of Greater Austin 2011; Real Estate Council of Austin 2011). But a large transportation bond package in 2010, with priorities largely codified in the Imagine Austin Plan, possibly tells more about the business community's position toward the plan's transportation priorities. The Chamber of Commerce offered strong public support for the bond package, and while RECA formally opposed the transportation proposal, they did not support the organized campaign against it; HBA made no public comment (Austin Business Journal 2010).

It is also important to look at one of the most significant and vocal opponents to the 2012 Imagine Austin plan, a group that previously had been one of the most ardent supporters of the city's comprehensive planning efforts: neighborhood association activists. Many neighborhood association leaders saw the 2012 plan as a reflection of the priorities of the business community. As a result, the ANC, the umbrella organization for the many neighborhood associations in Austin, refused to support it. Neighborhood activist Jeff Jack went so far as to call it an "elitist plan," and even a member of the Imagine Austin Plan's Citizen Advisory Taskforce, Ora Houston, called it a "land grab" (Toohey 2012; Smith 2012). The core issue these detractors had with the plan was that it envisioned considerably higher densities and more growth in existing urbanized areas. Many complained that politically connected areas, namely West Austin, would be excluded from the plan's effects (although, as the next section shows, existing private zoning makes denser development in this area nearly impossible). Because the plan anticipated more growth in central Austin neighborhoods, it would lead to ever greater pressures on older neighborhoods, particularly rising

land tax burdens resulting from the increased exchange value of land that accompanies new investments and demographic growth. These activists believed that the final plan largely ignored their input, concerns, and suggestions and was basically, as former head of the ANC Cory Walton said, just a "huge bonus" for developers (Ankrum 2010b).

Both the reaction of the opponents and the available evidence about support show that the coalitions that backed both the political reform (to a system of electoral districts) and comprehensive planning efforts largely relied on the support of the business community's leading organizations, or at a minimum their nonopposition. While neighborhood activists that opposed the Imagine Austin comprehensive plan identified some problems with it, they were unable to stop it because of the coalition that formed between those organizations and some environmentalists. In the case of the political reform, those nervous that the plan might undermine the West Austin–focused environmental community's role in local governance were caught in the reverse situation: contending against these same business groups in a different coalition supported largely by outlying areas, neighborhood association activists, and the city's nonwhite minorities, particularly Hispanics.

Much of the discussion about the impact of the contemporary political and comprehensive planning efforts treats them as two separate and distinct elements of a changing city, failing to appreciate what the confluence of the two in the city's history exposes about the structures of governance in Austin. This history reveals the enduring asymmetrical influence of the business community in helping policies and reforms come to fruition. Focusing on how planning and political reform have converged during the twentieth century requires looking not only at the instances when reformers were able to implement their priorities but also when they failed.

Progressivism, Planning, and Jim Crow

In Austin, as in much of Texas, Progressive-era municipal reform efforts were generally led by the business community's chief organizations, which were opposed to ward politics because of its potential for "corruption" and its tendency to support more populist elements in government (Rice 1977). In Austin in 1908 "a group of citizens," led by the Business League, ran a campaign "to convince the [city's] voters that a change in the city charter providing for commission government would assist in finding solution to their many municipal difficulties" (MacCorkle 1973, 35). The following year, Austin adopted a new municipal charter, which changed the structure of its local government from a ward system to an at-large commission system (Staniszewski 1977, 55). In local elections the same year, a slate of reform candidates, backed by the leading members of

the business community, won a landslide election and took control of the newly formed commission government (Austin Daily Statesman 1908; Staniszewski 1977, 27–29). Soon after entering office, the new administration undertook an effort to finance public works programs designed to encourage residential and commercial growth in Austin, such as building sewers and constructing a new dam for electricity (Stone, Price, and Stone 1939, 5; Seveik 1992).

Sixteen years later, in 1924, Austin adopted another Progressive-era reform and changed to a city-manager government; Austin was, in fact, the first larger city to do so. Unsatisfied with the 1909 reforms, members of the Chamber of Commerce, in an effort spearheaded by longtime manager Walter Long, in 1917 had begun advocating a change to a city-manager system (MacCorkle 1973, 48–49; Stone, Price, and Stone 1939, 16–17, 19). The principal reason given for this reform was the city commissioners' inability to secure a new bond package that would help Austin maintain or expand its municipal services (Stone, Price, and Stone 1939, 5–6, 14–15). While there was substantial opposition to changing the form of Austin's administration (the ballot proposition barely passed), in 1928, only four years after the change was finalized, the city's electorate endorsed a large bond package that helped finance capital improvements proposed in the city's first comprehensive plan (Austin Chamber of Commerce and Long 1948, 26). Much of the support for this bond package came from the two wealthiest areas of the city and the "Black ward," which was promised much-needed public investment in their community (Stone, Price, and Stone 1939, 20, 27; Staniszewski 1977, 33).

Like other "business progressives," members of Austin's business community believed that zoning was a means to modernize the city and make it a more suitable place for investment and commercial opportunities, and for about a decade, they actively tried to persuade the city government to embrace the principles of zoning and comprehensive planning (Long 1927; Long 1928). When Texas legalized comprehensive zoning in 1927 (largely modeled on the Standard Zoning Enabling Act), Austin was one of the first Texas cities to adopt a comprehensive zoning ordinance (Mixon 1991, 1:6–7; Chase 1932, 42). In addition, in 1928 Austin's City Council, at the behest of the Chamber of Commerce, hired the Dallas planning firm Koch and Fowler to create a master plan, which was adopted in 1929. The plan offered recommendations for public zoning regulations that encouraged separating residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. Under these new zoning rules, neighborhoods to the west, northwest, and north of the central business district were designated primarily for single-family residential developments, while those to the east and northeast were zoned for commercial, industrial, or unrestricted uses.

Antiblack racism played an important role in these early planning efforts. In Austin, as in many other cities in the South, ruling white elites wanted to create "racial zoning" standards—that is, to use racial categories in zoning and planning regulations—but court rulings routinely held such standards to be il-

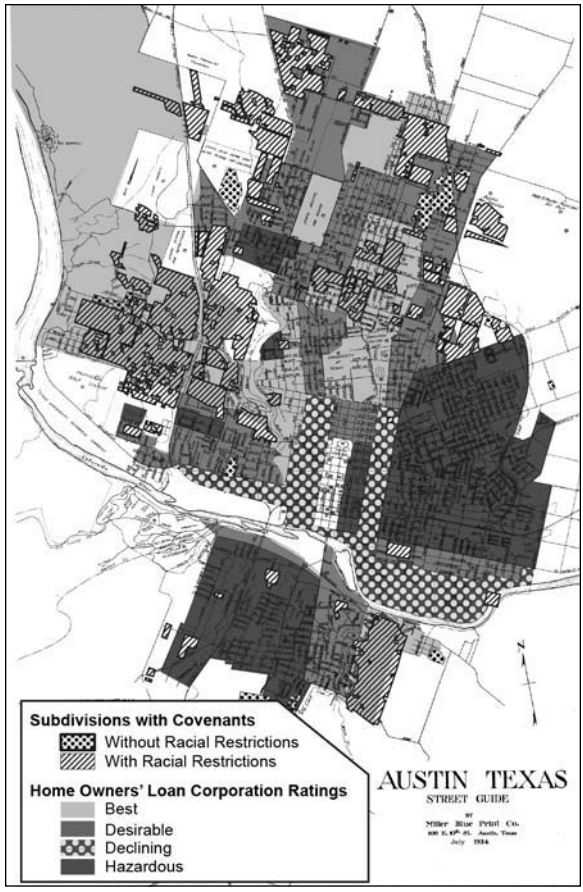

FIGURE 17.
The HOLC's Mortgage Risk Map and Austin Subdivisions with Racial Covenants. Based on map provided by M. Anwar Sounny-Slitine.

legal, so most comprehensive plans began to rely on "race-based" zoning. In race-based zoning (using legally segregated public services to engender racial apartheid), city planners could encourage racial segregation by creating "racial districts" for nonwhites with comparable municipal services (Silver 1997). Austin's 1928 planning followed that course and suggested the creation of "a Negro district" in the eastern section of the city (City of Austin 1928, 57). So while bond money was used for capital improvements that helped African Americans, they were designed to benefit only those who resided in East Austin (Kraus 1973, 150–152). A similar, albeit not as extensive, approach was used to segregate Hispanics in East Austin despite the fact that neither their housing patterns nor their use of municipal services was mentioned in the comprehensive plan (McDonald 2012, 101–143). Importantly, the areas in East Austin designated for African Americans and Hispanics were the same areas that were not zoned exclusively for residential uses under the 1928 plan.

Private zoning by deed restrictions also played an important role in shaping long-term land uses and residential segregation patterns in Austin (Tretter 2013). In fact, since the beginning of the twentieth century, the limits placed on land use by restrictive covenants have guided how zoning rules have been applied to certain areas of the city. For instance, the 1928 public zoning rules that created commercial and industrial districts, particularly the Central Business District, were used only in those areas because those areas lacked private zoning restrictions on noxious land uses or strict rules prohibiting anything other than single-family residential development. Moreover, after the adoption of public regulations on land use, deed restrictions were applied to a much larger segment of the city, especially in newly developing subdivisions in the north and west, following the 1928 plan's recommendations for residential zoning. Additionally, nearly all residential housing deeds in Austin, especially after 1935, contained racial restrictions that prohibited African Americans (and occasionally other nonwhite groups) from the right to use or occupy land (except, in many cases, as domestic servants). When these restrictions combined with the system of segregated public services, the result was that the residential choices available to African Americans were extremely limited in many parts of Austin for much of the twentieth century. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1949 that racially restrictive provisions in covenants were unenforceable, but all other restrictions on land use remained enforceable. Therefore, the widespread absence of private zoning rules in some parts of the city, namely areas in East Austin, made, and continues to make, non–single family residential, commercial, and industrial development much easier in those neighborhoods.

Moreover, the segregation of land uses and people in Austin created by both public and private zoning was reaffirmed by the federal government's Home Owner's Loan Corporation. A 1935 HOLC housing survey of Austin found that the city "suffered little" from the national economic decline, particularly in home values, and that "the greatest drop in values" was in "negro and inferior white sections in the southern part of the city" (Home Owners' Loan Corporation 1935, 8–9). However, the "Realty Area Map" showed all areas marked on the "Race Map" as the places where Hispanics and African Americans resided in large numbers, mostly in East Austin, in red, meaning they were "dangerous" for investment. The HOLC report was not a legally enforceable document, but it did "represent the composite judgment of seventeen well-informed real estate and mortgage men of Austin" (Home Owners' Loan Corporation 1935, 21). Their prejudice may have affected their willingness to lend money to homeowners in the area and, as a consequence, driven out financial opportunities, encouraged spatial segregation, and undermined the capacity of East Austinites to maintain the quality of their housing stock. Most importantly, the map reflected the influence of the 1928 Comprehensive Plan, as well as the pattern of distribution of private covenants. Marked in the 1928 plan as "white residential," western sec-

tions with covenants were later designated as the areas trending best for mortgage risk in the HOLC residential security map. It is worth noting too that the section marked "best" on Austin's residential security map is also the section where in 1950 the greatest percentage of racial and other forms of private land-use restrictions could be found.

In Austin, in the first half of the twentieth century, successful attempts to reform the city's system of elections became conjoined with its comprehensive planning efforts. Leading figures from the business community had attempted to remake Austin through comprehensive planning. They had modernized the city's infrastructure, codified the preexisting residential and land-use patterns through zoning controls, and solidified the racial apartheid within Austin. Most importantly, these leaders understood that the formal system for electing officials to the local government was important to the realization of their vision for the city. As the next section shows, this junction would continue through the middle portion of the twentieth century.

Planning for the Industrialization of Austin

The at-large system put in place in 1909 to elect representatives to the City Council (first called "commissioners" then later "council members") created five seats; until 1971, these representatives then nominated a mayor. Out of any field of potential candidates that ran for the City Council, the five individuals who received the greatest number of votes were elected. While some city residents worried that certain people or areas could have undue influence on electing particular City Council members, the principle behind at-large governance was to make representatives accountable to a broader segment of the population. But the effect of the system was to entrench incumbent candidates, make it more expensive to run for City Council, and limit the influence of less wealthy and territorially concentrated communities, such as nonwhite minorities, on local government (Olson 1965, 12). In effect, it supported the status quo, perpetuating the influence of the business community's principal organizations, which had resources and an extensive network of representation across the entire city, and of "white people," who were allowed to live in a larger number of zones throughout the city.

While the democratic "deficit" created by Progressive-era electoral reforms had long been documented, beginning in the early 1950s there were increasing calls to change the general at-large system to an at-large place system—a change that in fact reinforced the antidemocratic features of the at-large system (Bridges 1997, 75; Martin 1933, 212). Advocates of this reform seemed to have been motivated by the election of Emma Long to the City Council in 1948, although the nearly successful eighth-place finish of Arthur DeWitty, an African

American, in 1951 seems to have also provoked calls for this change. Long was elected in part because of her popularity with nonwhite minorities, and during her first few years on the City Council she "developed an active opposition in the community, especially among the bankers, land developers, and the large business people" (Orum 1987, 214). In 1952, business groups opposed to Long, plus a few others, began to press for an at-large place system. The idea was that five at-large places (or seats) would be created, and each candidate would have to choose to run for only one of these seats. The stated rationale for this proposal was to prevent the election of candidates who received less than 50 percent of the popular vote (which did happen) and to discourage "single-shot" voting, where voters cast votes for only one candidate rather than five (For A Better Austin 1953). Critics, however, charged that these reforms were designed to help "business-oriented candidates" and decrease "the possibility" that an African American would be elected (Olson 1965, 11). Despite these objections, made most vocally by Long, in 1953 the electorate, in a referendum, overwhelmingly approved this reform. Although Long maintained a position on the City Council (and served for many more years), the reform solidified the business community as a perdurable bloc in future elections.

Like the reforms of the 1920s, the reform of the City Council in 1953 occurred concurrently with attempts to increase the local government's involvement in urban planning. Along with the City Council reform charter amendment adopted in 1952, thirty-two other propositions supported by the business community won approval from Austin's electorate. Several of the propositions were designed to greatly empower the Austin Planning Commission. In particular, these reforms allowed the Planning Commission to recommend a master plan to the City Council for approval and made any adopted master plan a legally enforceable guide to the commission's future decisions. Pressure to create a master plan had been building from a coalition led by the Chamber of Commerce that included groups such as the League of Women Voters and the Austin Real Estate Board (Mitchell 1957). Under its new authority, the Planning Commission hired an urban planner to update the 1928 comprehensive plan, and in 1955 a detailed draft plan called the Austin Plan was released. It offered a completely new vision for the city, one that foresaw significant increases in Austin's population over the next three decades, large-scale industrial development, expansive residential and commercial suburbanization, the renewal of older sections of the city, and the changing character of businesses in the central business district (City of Austin 1955).

Many of the specific recommendations from the 1955 Austin Plan were later rejected, but the overall vision embodied in the plan was endorsed by the master plan adopted in 1961 and known as the Austin Development Plan. It envisioned the reorganization of the central business district to accommodate automobiles, large-scale suburban residential and commercial growth (especially in the north

and northwest areas), an urban renewal program in the neighborhoods of more modestly resourced peoples, and extensive industrial development (City of Austin 1961, 5–10). Moreover, the 1961 plan proposed a vastly expanded network of arterial roads.

The 1961 plan also offered specific recommendations to support industrial growth. It noted that although Austin had some limited industrial development, it should be "attractive to new industries such as research, fabricating plants, electronics manufacturing, precision tool and instrument manufacture and other 'light' industrial operations" (City of Austin 1961, 9). To meet this future demand, the plan recommended that three areas in the city be designated as the places where expanding future industrial development should be concentrated. Two were in suburban locations, but the third was closer to Austin's downtown:

> The Land Use Plan anticipates the continued development of large industrial areas in the northwest, east, and southeast sections of the city. . . . It is anticipated that many industrial plants in the downtown area will find it desirable to move to outlying locations in the future. These industries, as well as present scattered industries, should be encouraged to relocate in planned industrial areas when possible. The present industrial operations occupy about 400 acres of land and related "heavy" commercial uses about 100 acres. The Plan envisions that about 3,400 acres will be needed to meet the requirements of industrial growth. (City of Austin 1961, 9)

To fulfill this industrial vision, the plan, clearly pointing to the land-use conditions just to the east of the central business district, called for the "redevelopment of industrial areas where scattered residences, small parcels, and inadequate streets inhibit industrial development" (City of Austin 1961, 10). In this respect, the plan's recommendations for where industrial growth ought to occur simply reinforced the patterns of land-use segregation that had been established in the 1920s by private and public zoning regulations.

Over the next decade Austin would undergo a dramatic expansion, and in order to enable the creation of the new industrial Austin, control over the implementation of the planning process was essential. Beginning in the 1950s, the Planning Commission, the City Council, and the electorate heavily favored Austin's rapid urbanization. Millions of dollars were spent on extending and improving existing public infrastructure to keep pace with the expanding city. To get a sense of this growth one need only look at the increase in Austin's municipal debt from 1945 to 1973. In 1945, the city's general obligation bonds were about $5 million (about the same as 1930), and by 1973 they were almost $45 million (about $18 million in 1945 dollars). Similarly, revenue bonds grew from about $50 million in 1960 to over $155 million in 1973 (about $100 million in 1960 dollars) (City of Austin 1974, 26). The significant increase in the city's bonding in the 1960s largely supported the priorities set down by Austin's 1961 master plan and its program of residential growth, urban renewal, and light industrial devel-

opment (City of Austin 1965, 3; McMurtry 1963). By the early 1970s, all of these efforts had come to fruition. Ever greater portions of the urban fringe had been converted into residential housing, a publically funded urban renewal program was renovating many neighborhoods (especially in East Austin), and industrial development was finally being realized, as Chamber of Commerce efforts had proved effective at supporting homegrown industrial firms and bringing a branch of IBM to Austin in 1966.

As in the 1920s, establishing and realizing the priorities laid out in the city's 1961 comprehensive plan was connected to the implementation of the 1953 political reform because this reform had helped ensure that certain kinds of people and interests had more representation within the local government. Had nonwhites and more modestly resourced communities been more represented on the Planning Commission or the City Council, the master plan may have expressed a different set of priorities. Instead, city planning efforts reinforced social and economic inequalities, prioritized suburban growth, and supported a plan of industrialization that was largely ruinous for nonwhite communities.

The Failure to Deliver: Single-Member Districts and Master Planning, 1970–2000

In the 1970s, more and more members of Austin's City Council were being elected with the support of interest groups that were made up of sizeable concentrations of students, Hispanics, African Americans, neighborhood associations, or environmentalists, and these City Council members increasingly opposed many of the progrowth priorities advocated by the business community's principal organizations. While these interest groups were never completely aligned in a long-term ruling coalition, from time to time over the next several decades, they formed a loosely organized majority voting bloc on the City Council. Two of the central priorities advocated by this coalition were changing Austin's system for electing local City Council members to a district system and adjusting the priorities in the city's comprehensive plan to reflect a vision of growth management.

An important development that affected the composition of the City Council at this time was the emergence of students as a significant electoral force. The student population at the University of Texas grew dramatically in the 1960s, as did the percentage of students in Austin's population: in 1964 enrollment was about 26,000 (about 12 percent) of the city's population; by 1973 it had risen to over 40,000 (around 16 percent) (City of Austin 1974, 20). Realizing the potential strength of this demographic reality and the future impact of the 1971 constitutional amendment lowering the national voting age to eighteen, a group of students organized a voter registration effort and a campaign to elect a City

Council member in 1970. Largely as a result of these efforts, in 1971 Jeff Friedman, a twenty-six-year-old, won a seat on the City Council; four years later he became the city's second popularly elected at-large mayor (Orum 1987, 272–273). However, because Austin has a weak-mayor system, the mayor has no more executive power than other City Council members.

Another factor that significantly influenced local politics was the rising power of Hispanics as a more or less coherent political group. In 1950, it was estimated that Hispanics were about 10% of the city's population; by 1970 this number had increased to about 15% (City of Austin 1974, 14). While Hispanics had faced discrimination in Texas since the nineteenth century, until the 1950s their main strategy to gain equal treatment had been to demand their legal standing as "whites"; under Texas law and court rulings, all persons not "black" (without "African ancestry") were legally white (Behnken 2011). However, these efforts proved largely ineffective at lessening the pervasive unequal status of Hispanics (Macdonald 2012). In fact, after the 1950s, "real white people" used Hispanics' legal status as "whites" to preserve their own privileges. For instance, in the 1960s Austin's school authority tried to integrate the city's school by subterfuge, contending that since Hispanics were counted as "whites," school integration could be accomplished without busing because Hispanics could simply be placed into schools with high African American student populations (Davis 1975, 54–55). While Hispanics remained largely "white" by law, increasingly some court rulings, beginning in the 1950s, affirmed their legal standing as a distinct group within Texas that was subjected to illegal forms of discrimination (Martinez 1993). Furthermore, in the 1960s, the unique position of Hispanics within Texas's racial hierarchy became the point of mobilization in the growing Chicano movement, a group that, instead of demanding to be treated as "white," claimed recognition as a distinct cultural group (Montejano 2010, 263–270).

A 1967 charter amendment, adopted by referendum, created two additional at-large places on the City Council and had significant implications for shattering the color line for local elected officials in Austin. In 1971 African American Berl Handcox won a seat on the City Council, making him the first African American City Council member since Reconstruction. Four years later John Trevino became the first-ever Mexican American City Council member. Some people have claimed that these successes were the result of a so-called gentleman's agreement struck between the white business community and a group of conservative nonwhite minorities (Davidson 2012). The agreement, it has been suggested, created these two places for nonwhite candidates who were acceptable to this dominant power structure and was designed to stave off future legal challenges to the racially discriminatory effects of Austin's at-large place system (Largey 2011). Although only circumstantial evidence supports the allegations of this conspiracy, it is true that on any City Council since 1975, nonwhites have held at most two of the seven places.

But for many community members, the election of an African American and a Hispanic to the City Council in the 1970s did not sufficiently address the lack of democratic representation. A group of reformers, led by former City Council member Emma Long, began to demand that Austin change from an at-large system to a single-member district system (Moody 1973). These advocates noted that because of historical prejudice and other market and nonmarket forces, Austin's more modestly resourced nonwhite communities resided in highly concentrated numbers in East Austin. In fact, during the 1950s and 1960s, as Austin's population grew, the segregation of nonwhite minorities became more stark (City of Austin 1979). In particular, the growing population of Hispanics was settling in a large but territorially contiguous area of East Austin (City of Austin 1974, 14). Advocates contended that a district system might allow nonwhite minorities to become more easily elected to the City Council, which in turn would more than likely increase minority representation on the City Council, especially for Hispanics.

Attempts to challenge the at-large system of representation found in many local governments were common in Texas in the 1970s and 1980s, and provisions in the 1964 Federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) meant to protect minority voting supported these efforts. Beginning in the 1970s, a coalition led by Hispanic and African American groups used these VRA clauses to successfully challenge the at-large systems in local governments around the Dallas metropolitan area. Although courts ruled that this system of representation had effectively limited the power of minorities to elect their own candidates, their rulings maintained a very high threshold for showing the discriminatory effects of at-large systems (Davidson and Korbel 1981, 984). In 1975, an amendment to the VRA broadened the class of persons protected from voting discrimination from only African Americans to include, among other groups, Hispanics. The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) had been a great advocate for this change because of a concern about San Antonio's liberal annexation efforts and their effect on Hispanic representation in the city's at-large districts. Under the new guidelines, all redistricting efforts in Texas, including those of local governments, became subject to Federal Justice Department approval. According to one study, this provision was "instrumental in San Antonio's change from an at-large to a pure single-member district plan in 1977" (Brischetto et al. 1994, 246). However, U.S. Supreme Court rulings continued to affirm a high standard to show how at-large systems discriminated against nonwhites. As a result, in 1982, supporters helped pass an amendment to the VRA that changed the standard to prove discrimination in voting from "discriminatory intent" to "discriminatory effect" (Baiz 1983). Following this new standard, "minority vote dilution"—that is, any practice that reduced the chances that minorities could elect preferred candidates by pooling them with other groups—became a more common legal challenge to at-large systems (Davidson 1992).

Despite the victories reformers had across Texas, in Austin from 1973 to 2011, every attempt to abolish the at-large system of representation and replace it with a district or district/at-large hybrid system failed (see figure 13). In the first unsuccessful attempt at reform in 1973, a referendum garnered about 40 percent support among the electorate. In response, the NAACP and MALDEF filed a suit in federal court in 1976, but in 1977 a judge ruled against these plaintiffs and held that because a "black and Mexican-American" had been elected at-large to the City Council there was "evidence" that their "interests" were being represented (United States Court of Appeals Fifth Circuit 1984, quoted in Volma Decision, 957). The following year, in 1978, another ballot proposal to create a district system did not garner even 30 percent approval from the electorate. Undeterred, supporters filed another lawsuit in federal court in 1984 (in the wake of the 1982 amendments to the VRA) to force the city to adopt a single-member district system; while the City Council agreed to settle and implement a district system, a judge refused to compel the City Council to accept the agreement (Tucci 1984; United States Court of Appeals Fifth Circuit 1984). The next year, an identical reform measure was put before the electorate, and with about the same turnout, support for the measure was just over 40 percent. Although court challenges stopped, reformers continued to press on, but local referendum efforts in 1988, 1994, and 2002 also faltered (Dunbar 2011). In response, reformers turned to the state legislators that represented Austin's suburbs, most notably Republican state senator Jeff Wentworth, who began to introduce bills that would force Austin to use a single-member district system (Coppola 2011).

From 1970 to 1994, supporters and opponents of reforms to the at-large system in Austin tended to form into more or less well-defined camps. On one side, students, nonwhite minority communities, nonwhite minority City Council members, and especially members of Austin's neighborhood associations advocated for reform. They contended that in addition to disenfranchising nonwhites, the at-large system undermined the accountability of City Council members to neighborhoods and favored the election of conservative and wealthier candidates who were friendly to the priorities of the business community's principal organizations. On the other side, opponents, like the progressive reformers from the early twentieth century, argued that the at-large system elected better representatives who were more interested in citywide interests rather than extreme candidates or those interested only in the condition of individual districts. These opponents were mainly drawn from the more conservative wing of the City Council and the business community, particularly the Chamber of Commerce (BeSaw 1973; Tucci 1985; Wright 1994). In the mid-1980s, the fight was particularly intense as the opposition became fiercer, in part because neighborhood associations and nonwhite minorities envisioned redistricting as an essential way to advance their core priorities (Tucci 1984).

For many members of the City Council elected in the 1970s, a central priority

was also to use comprehensive planning to manage Austin's largely uncontrolled growth. This goal was supported by a charter amendment passed in a 1973 referendum that removed the requirement that Planning Commission members own real property and also mandated that at least four of its nine members *not* be "directly or indirectly connected to real estate or land development" (City of Austin 1973). Beginning in 1973, under the authority granted to it in 1953, a newly composed Planning Commission, with the help of Austin's Planning Department, began to rewrite the city's master plan. Intentionally involving much more citizen participation than previous comprehensive plans, this planning effort, while largely guided by input from a select group of "neighborhood representatives," allowed hundreds of people to become actively involved in the planning process (City of Austin 1980, 7–8). The result of this effort was the Austin Tomorrow Plan, released in 1977 and adopted in its entirety by the City Council in 1979.

The Austin Tomorrow Plan was unique because in contrast to previous master plans it largely reflected the aspirations of those "Austin citizens [that were] concerned about the destructive effects of continued urbanization on their neighborhoods and natural environment" (City of Austin 1980, 9). So unlike earlier comprehensive plans that envisioned urban planning as a means to promote urban growth, the goal of the 1979 plan was growth management. The plan's recommendations were predominately guided by an overall vision that foresaw the majority of new urban growth being channeled and contained in a narrow but elongated area that followed the path of the Interstate 35 corridor. The primary mechanism proposed to influence the pattern of urbanization was to limit the city's support for utilities and other capital improvements outside this area.

The process of writing and adopting the 1979 Austin Tomorrow master plan ended up being enormously contentious, and the plan was vociferously resisted by the business community's principal associations, so the fact that it was adopted was an impressive achievement for its supporters. In the long run, however, its framework for growth management proved largely ineffective. Butler and Myers argued that at least three factors undermined the plan's efficacy: (1) in 1975 Austin's electorate, divided about the potential effects that its related bonds might have on the implementation of the plan's vision, began voting against the funding mechanisms meant to "provide the necessary funds for capital improvements" and "provide the infrastructure incentives planned for the northern and southern ends of the preferred growth corridor"; (2) in 1981 the independent water authority, the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), agreed to supply water to developments outside the "preferred growth corridor"; and (3) a 1971 change in Texas law permitted the creation of Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs), new legal entities that allowed developers to issue bonds to support capital improvements required for residential, commercial, and industrial

developments and then "levy a surcharge on residents" to "recover the costs" (Butler and Myers 1984, 449–451; Shahin 1980). Moreover, because of the ever expanding network of highways in and around Austin (largely financed by the state government), developments could be located just beyond the city's boundaries and thus be excluded from municipal zoning regulations (Butler and Myers 1984, 456–457). The City Council, while often opposing these MUDs, was forced to accept them as a concession to developers, who in turn agreed to some zoning requirements (Butler and Myers 1984, 452). Moreover, the business community's principal organizations, which had been largely sidelined in the planning process, became more aggressive in vying for political control over the City Council, seeking to defeat some members who had supported the comprehensive plan and pressuring later City Council members to not follow its recommendations (Swearingen 2010, 120–122).

To address the ineffectiveness of the Austin Tomorrow comprehensive plan, beginning in 1986 an attempt was made to update the plan and make it conform to a new requirement, passed by the electorate the year prior, that established "comprehensive planning as a continuous and ongoing governmental function" (City of Austin 1986). At the time, "Local officials believed that the failure of . . . Austin Tomorrow was due in large part to having excluded certain influential political interests [namely the business community]. The Austinplan Steering Committee therefore [intentionally] represented nine groups: business, culture, environmental, ethnic minority, human services, neighborhoods, public sector, real estate, and community at large" (Beatley, Brower, and Lucy 1994, 187).

In addition to the ninety-four-person steering committee, task forces were formed around fourteen different priority areas such as transportation and land use, and these groups were to make recommendations to the steering committee. But while the steering committee and the task forces mainly developed the plan's overarching vision, its essence lay in the creation of twenty-two sector-planning areas of the city (City of Austin 1988). Large-scale citizen participation was vital to creating maps and recommendations for future land uses, economic activities, transportation improvements, and other functions in each sector.

In the end, however, the comprehensive planning effort failed to gather sustained public support. It did offer significant amendments to the 1979 master plan, envisioning potential urban growth in a much larger area and planning for much more road construction in both the central city and the surrounding suburbs. Moreover, it proposed the creation of a bike-thoroughfare network throughout Austin and encouraged more development concentrated in central nodes that would be connected by mass transit. Nevertheless, as time wore on, the planning process "became riddled with competing interests[,] and its consensus based approach collapsed as infighting prevented individuals and groups from reaching agreement" (Lopez 2006, 61). At the time, newspaper accounts attributed its failure to attempts to do too much, lack of coherence of dedicated

groups, and strong opposition from the business community (Pope 1989; Sargent 1989). Moreover, the master plan's most ambitious aspect, which was that it would become a legally binding document governing the city's growth, was nullified by the state legislature's passage of a bill, led by Terrell Smith, that made all comprehensive plans non–legally enforceable guidelines (Texas State Legislature 1989). Finally, Austin became mired in an economic recession that was caused by three factors: the precipitous fall of the price of oil on the world market, the financial insolvency of Savings and Loan Thrifts, and a substantial bust in the local land-development market (see chapter 1).

In the late 1980s, the combination of the land recession, the collapse of the Austinplan effort, and the failure of the Austin Tomorrow Plan to manage suburban growth patterns helped encourage the abandonment of comprehensive planning for the next two decades. In the 1990s a system of "neighborhood planning" emerged. Largely due to the efforts of council member Jackie Goodman, a twenty-four-member Citizen's Planning Committee (CPC), chaired by architect Ben Heimsath, was created in 1994 to develop a new planning framework for Austin, one largely based on the principles of New Urbanism and designed to bring the business community back into the planning process. Even before the City Council embraced these principles for urban development, this group pioneered collaborations with the business community in the mid-1990s to promote a New Urbanist vision among Austin's governing bodies (Austin American-Statesman 1995a; Phenix 1996). Between 1994 and 1997, several reports released by the CPC, reflecting the influence of New Urbanism, recommended redeveloping the central business district and East Austin; simplifying and reforming the development code to promote more infill and density; and encouraging more transit-oriented mixed-use projects (Citizens' Planning Committee 1995, 1996, 1999). The business community responded positively to these ideas, especially the idea of rewriting the land-use code (Jayson 1994, Lindell 1995).

However, the centerpiece of the CPC's endeavors was their prescription to transfer planning efforts to the neighborhood scale. Breaking down the city's planning program into smaller units would allow for the creation of a more flexible land-use system, more local land-use variations, and, it was hoped, a more collaborative relationship among developers, neighborhood groups, environmentalists, and the City of Austin's Planning Department (Marban 1995). It would also increase citizen involvement in the planning process (Moscoso 1997). To institutionalize this citizen participation, one of the CPC's central recommendations, later adopted by the City Council in 1997, was to make a registry of existing neighborhood associations, reduce their vast numbers and sometimes conflicting geographical boundaries, and incorporate them as formal stakeholders in the development process (Heimsath 1995). By 1997, after an extensive review undertaken by the city's government, the number of neighborhood associations had been cut in half. Later that year the city began to impose a formal registry system

for neighborhood associations, which developers relied on to alert surrounding communities about their future projects (Austin American-Statesman 1997). Advocates of this formal system argued that it was a necessary step in bringing developers back into the planning process because neighborhood protests, which increased a developers' cost by causing delays, were often instigated by a lack of information or misinformation about new developments (Dworin 1995).

Following several pilot projects started in 1996, neighborhood planning quickly spread throughout the city, and by 2012 most development in the city's urban core was guided by a neighborhood plan. Each of these neighborhood plans contained a mix of priorities and preferences of that area's multiple stakeholders, such as developers, residents, and neighborhood associations, which were codified on a future land-use map (FLUM). Like other comprehensive maps, FLUMs are not legally binding as land-use regulations, but once adopted by the City Council, they become amended to the 1979 comprehensive plan and, perforce, do serve "as a guide for future rezoning proposals" (Lopez 2006, 65).

While it was never explicitly stated, at the turn of the twenty-first century it became clear that "the Neighborhood Planning process [was being used] . . . to create a comprehensive plan through the back door"—a use that had several problems (Keeling 2000, 32). First, the charter reform adopted in 1985 mandated that Austin create a workable master plan. Second, not all of the planning areas had adopted neighborhood plans, so there was an uneven patchwork throughout the city's central areas. Third, the areas that had created neighborhood plans were located mainly in the existing urbanized areas. While the majority of people lived in these areas, it was not where the majority of development, which concerned environmentalists, was happening. In fact, urbanization in the outer areas of Austin remained largely unguided even by the 1979 master plan. Finally, the neighborhood planning process had been fraught for both neighborhood associations and developers. On the one hand, while the neighborhood plans engaged neighborhood associations as formal stakeholders in the planning process, the planning areas did not rely on the existing geographical boundaries but rather created new planning districts that sometimes contained several neighborhood associations. As a result, conflict sometimes emerged among associations, particularly over the FLUM's prospective land-use recommendations (McCann 2003; Wilson 2006). On the other hand, members of the business community noted that a "drawback . . . of these neighborhood planning districts is that, very often, existing residents of a community do not want an intensity of use that they feel would compromise neighborhood quality" (Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce 2003, 115).

Furthermore, the New Urbanist planning principles embodied in the neighborhood planning process had been an important factor in the gentrification of East Austin and were opposed by groups that represented nonwhite minorities. Certainly, the CPC's recommendations had encouraged gentrification when it

pushed for the redevelopment of East Austin. Perhaps as important, however, is the lingering impact of past public and private zoning in East Austin. One reason it was much easier to build new infill developments in these areas, even if they diverged from the recommendations of a FLUM, is that they lacked many of the private controls over land use that had been adopted in other areas of the city more than half a century earlier.

From the 1970s to the early part of the twenty-first century, the coalition that had managed several times to control the formal levers of power in the municipal government nevertheless failed to reform Austin's system of political representation and develop or implement a workable comprehensive plan. Had reformers of the city's local election system been able to achieve their goal, Austin's nonwhite communities might have been greatly empowered, which in turn might have strengthened the coalition's chances of solidifying its governing position and strengthened City Council's ability to pursue a comprehensive planning vision that reflected the coalition's ideals about how the city ought to grow. Instead, in the late 1990s groups in Austin's fast-developing suburbs, often hostile to mainstream environmentalism, entered into a coalition with the city's nonwhite communities to abolish Austin's at-large system of representation. (This coalition was later strongly supported by the business community.) In comparison, when comprehensive planning was officially abandoned in the 1990s, it was replaced with a system of neighborhood planning that was guided by the principles of New Urbanism. By the late 1990s, this planning paradigm had become the basis for a new governing consensus among the city's mainstream environmental and business communities about the future direction of urban growth: priority should be given to new developments that reorganized development patterns in neighborhoods in the existing urbanized areas. Coincidentally, the communities that were most affected by this new planning agenda, more modestly resourced communities living in the existing urbanized area, were not its leading supporters.

Imagining a Better Austin Tomorrow, Today

The priorities of the governing coalition that was born in the 1990s are reflected in the Imagine Austin master plan, which, like nearly all of the city's planning efforts over the last two decades, envisions a city that has a denser, more connected urbanized area. The expectation among its supporters is that this will create the conditions for a more livable city with vibrant communities and a healthy natural environment, although there is evidence that the benefits associated with this new form of urbanization, as chapters 4 and 5 showed, may not be available to many of Austin's more modestly resourced communities (Mueller and Dooling 2011). Moreover, nonwhite minorities were largely excluded from

the comprehensive planning process, not by intention but by omission. A recent study on public input for the Imagine Austin plan shows that it mainly came from well-educated white people living in the central city, findings that are very similar to a 1987 study of public participation during the debate over the Austinplan (Goodspeed 2010). Therefore, the input gathered from the "public" that was used to justify the priorities of the Imagine Austin plan may merely reflect the leading priorities of the members of the governing coalition—that is, key representatives from the business and environmental communities.

But is there a connection between the support of major business community association for single-member districts and the comprehensive planning effort like there was in the past? While few public documents account for the business community's motivation for supporting the political reform, a 2003 audit by an independent consulting firm commissioned by the Chamber of Commerce on Austin's "business climate" does suggest a connection to urban development. The report notes in the executive summary section on "business costs" that "the regulatory and permitting processes in the city of Austin are time consuming, arbitrary and cumbersome. An at-large City Council with no district representation, numerous, powerful neighborhood groups and an active environmental lobby in Austin make the process of receiving permit approval often difficult" (Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce 2003, 7).

The aforementioned statement is especially interesting because it was based on "numerous individual interviews and focus groups" with leading members of Austin's business community as well as "an extensive online survey" of 174 respondents (Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce 2003, 1).Thus, it provides an excellent window into the attitude of leading members of the business community toward the electoral reform. Later in the same report, the connection is stated more baldly: "Because Austin's councilpersons are elected at-large, they have no direct stake in the particular neighborhoods in question, and therefore may impose citywide views on neighborhood-area issues" (Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce 2003, 114). This section of the report is referring to the neighborhood planning process and its problems, particularly the ability of an individual property owner to delay the formation of zoning districts. Nevertheless, in context, the statement suggests that despite the tremendous amount of development in Austin over the previous thirty years, the business community's representatives still believed that the at-large system favored the creation of a "Byzantine" land-use code and complex FLUMs that empowered environmentalists and neighborhood associations and produced unnecessary delays in permitting and zoning.

What about the Imagine Austin Plan? Will it also help relieve the problems that were identified as the main priorities of the leading business groups? Certainly the passage of the comprehensive plan has initiated a complete rewriting of the land-use code, something that had been opposed by both environmen-

talists and neighborhood association activists for decades, and something they opposed in their public comments on the Imagine Austin Plan (Stone 2012). Moreover, there will be discrepancies between the master and neighborhood plans, especially if the density priorities proposed in the comprehensive plan do not align with the development goals set forth in individual neighborhood plans. At this point it is unclear which of the two plans will play a greater role in guiding future decisions about variances in land use and zoning, but the master plan does provide a justification for modifications, particularly for greater density in the existing urbanized areas of the city. However, the key to the support of the business community's principal organizations for the comprehensive plan, as it was with past plans, may lie not in how the plan affects day-to-day planning decisions but rather in how its vision guides priorities for future bonding. A defining feature of the Imagine Austin plan is its emphasis on rescaling the city's planning efforts to the region, a priority that is overwhelmingly supported by the principal business associations. Echoing the priorities identified in strategic documents of the business community's principal representatives, the plan stresses the need for a more regionally integrated transportation planning and governance. The rescaling of Austin's planning efforts may in fact be the most significant aspect of the plan because this geographical reimagining will guide priorities for future capital improvements, particularly the spending of millions of dollars to expand the city's transportation network to create a more effectively interconnected region.

REFLECTIONS

Outside the Shadows

> If democracy is to mean anything, it is the ability to all agree to arrange things in a different way.
>
> **David Graeber, *Debt: The First Five Thousand Years***

Repetition

In 2013, popular *Texas Monthly* magazine published a collection of commentaries on Texas's major cities, and two of them were about Austin. One, written by John Spong (a *Texas Monthly* staff reporter), titled "All Grown Up," suggested that although Austin's physical and social environment had changed substantially over the previous twenty years, the city still retained an abiding culture of tolerance to difference, a culture that not only provided the city with its great quality of life but was the main factor in propelling its phenomenal growth. While reserving animus for those who complained that the city's growth had changed it for the worse, Spong amicably parroted the tall tale (that has been repeated ad nauseam) about the large role the city's culture played in driving its rapid urban development. Notably, his article attracted very little commentary, critical or otherwise.

The other commentary, penned by Cecilia Balli (an associate professor of journalism at UT Austin), was titled "What Nobody Says about Austin." In it she declared that Austin was the most segregated city in Texas and that its citizens refused to confront the lingering impact of white supremacy on the city's governance. But perhaps most importantly (at least in terms of the public response), she insinuated that while Austinites were supposedly renowned for their tolerance to difference, their open-mindedness was, by and large, extended only to the quirky behavior associated primarily with "white" people. Balli's article prompted a vigorous discussion in Austin's blogosphere, and while there was some support for her editorial, it was overshadowed by a torrent of outrage.

Although Balli can be faulted for some factual errors, ahistorical assumptions, and hyperbolic claims, the vast majority of the negative responses to her article did not point to any of these issues. Instead, they relied on racist, misogynist, and other ad hominem attacks that, more than anything, showed how intolerant Austinites can be, especially to those who cast even a small amount of shade over the city's excessively sunny image.

The articles by Spong and Balli poignantly represent two of the most common conversations taking place in and about Austin today. On the one hand, there is an interminable debate about whether the changes in the city's physical infrastructure are good, principally as they pertain to Austin's cultural life. On the other hand, there is an ongoing discussion about Austin's stark pattern of racial segregation and how what is considered "Austin's culture" is pregnant with notions of whiteness. Both of the authors, despite speaking to only one of these discussions, are optimistic that the problem they identify can be solved. One suggests that there is no cause for alarm because of the durability of a local sensibility, and the other, while concerned, believes that a new multicultural sensitivity to difference will emerge. However, both authors overlook the more fundamental question driving both of their discussions: who has relatively more control over who (or what) bears the costs associated with how the city has been developing?

In this book, I have demonstrated how the past and present patterns of urban development in Austin have been strongly influenced by a historically varying, but still relatively stable, system of asymmetrical power relations that has engendered both uneven development among neighborhoods and inequalities among peoples. From urban renewal programs to Smart Growth planning efforts, those people who were in a relatively more vulnerable position than others (for a variety of reasons) have shouldered more of the costs associated with changes to the city's urban environment. Moreover, a series of growth coalitions with different, albeit similar, political configurations have had determinately more influence over local governance and the policies and programs that were (or could be) enacted to facilitate specific changes in Austin's urban form. If there is any hope of resolving the issues brought up in these popular discussions, the discussion has to recognize the significant role of social, geographical, and institutional unevenness, both historically and contemporarily, in shaping the varying fortunes and fates of different people and places.

Summary

In the first three chapters I pointed out how the dynamic industrial and urban development in Austin is significantly connected to the ability of the city's growth coalition to take advantage of two interrelated factors: (1) the restructur-

ing of the national economy, where the leading industrial sectors shifted from activities involving labor-intensive manufacturing toward knowledge-intensive services; and (2) the changing geographical patterns of industrial investment, which supported the urbanization of new regions such as the Sunbelt. Moreover, I noted how Austin's recent growth dynamics might have benefited from a number of preexisting local factors such as the presence of a large university, a relatively educated population, a strong institutional relationship among members of the growth coalition, and a racially stratified workforce dominated by services.

However, I departed significantly from previous studies on Austin by arguing that the city's urban geography, both its physical morphology and its political structures, still had to be considerably modified in order for Austin's growth coalition to take advantage of the changing value of knowledge production and dissemination as well as the shifting national and international flows of investment (in terms of both sector and location). To be precise, in chapters 2 and 3, I showed how UT Austin was an essential actor in facilitating a significant spatial, and consequentially a social and economic, transformation of the city. Certainly, the university's role as a knowledge factory, first in producing a highly technically skilled workforce and later as the holder of intellectual patents, helped produce local businesses and change the region's geography. But, as I stressed, the university also had a potent and unique role as a major land developer, and in this capacity it substantially influenced how Austin's urban geography was made or remade to support the growth coalition's industrial development strategy and advance the city's firm orientation toward what is now called the knowledge economy. Moreover, and in part as a consequence of the university's land development efforts, the configuration of the local growth coalition was significantly altered. In particular, the university's administration, and by extension the state government, became much more entrenched as a leading actor within the local growth coalition.

Furthermore, I contended (greatly diverging from the existing literature on Austin in the process) that the terminology developed by David Harvey in his model of the expanding reproduction of capital could account for the urban growth dynamics revealed in this case study. First, I argued that how capital flows into and out of three possible circuits is a significant factor in shaping patterns of urbanization because capital switching among circuits affects not only sectors but also, as a result, places. Second, I argued that capital flows into secondary and tertiary circuits and the associated appropriation of revenue from technological and knowledge rents has a substantial role in driving contemporary patterns of urbanization, especially in highly industrialized economies. However, analyzing Austin's urban development through this approach also revealed how the city may be an exceptional case, a place where, as a result of the lingering influence of past development strategies and the city's less elevated po-

sition within the global urban hierarchy (a reflection of its intense specialization in certain producer services), the revenues from knowledge and technological rents have come to play an unbalanced role as drivers of the city's growth.

The overarching theme that runs through the book's last three chapters is connecting two issues: (1) the effects on urban life in Austin from implementing various planning regimes; and (2) the durable significance of the business community in shaping the city's urban planning policies and priorities. The main point evinced by these chapters is that today, as in various periods in the twentieth century, the business community's principal organizations have a disproportionate influence on how urban planning policies and priorities take shape. In particular I focused on how the widespread embracing of several new urban design principles, principles that continue to play a very strong role in informing present planning practice, resulted in part from the business community's willingness to reach a political compromise with a leading political faction of the environmental community. As in previous times, this compromise has had significant consequences for communities not included in this governing coalition. While there may not be anything particularly special about the business community's unequal influence in Austin's local governance, especially in Texas, the effects on the city's development are unique. In particular, Austin's planning efforts have had distinctive local effects that are reflected in the city's urban form.

Synthesis

There seems to be an association between cities that, like Austin, are both leading centers in the knowledge economy and leaders in meeting sustainable development goals, especially as they pertain to the environment. But is there a substantial connection between the contemporary economic processes (characterized by distinctive forms of rent seeking) that innervate Austin's industrial and urban development and the particular planning policies and priorities (broadly covered under the rubric of urban sustainability) that have emerged to reorganize the city's urban form?

Richard Florida's famed argument about the role of the creative class in shaping urban development patterns would suggest a connection. In a nutshell, his argument is that competitive cities remain competitive because of their ability to capture and retain certain kinds of highly technically skilled (talented) workers and other so-called creatives. And because one strong preference of such workers is to live in places with lots of ecological amenities, urban growth coalitions support policies attuned to sustainability, particularly in terms of the natural environment. Here is how Florida describes the connection in Austin in his hit book *Cities and the Creative Class*:

> Austin, Texas, has developed a two-pronged strategy for its economic future: high technology and smart growth along with lifestyle amenities. In 1998, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce undertook a new regional strategy outlined in a report entitled Next Century Economy. . . . The report identified three strategies for the city to follow in developing sustainable advantage. The first strategy involved bolstering the region's already thriving high-technology economy by (1) improving communication between the region's economic clusters and their suppliers, (2) improving the economic foundations of existing businesses, (3) leveraging clusterbased R&D at the University of Texas, and (4) attracting firms to complement existing industries by filling supply gaps in existing clusters. The second strategy called for the region to "ensure environmental quality and social opportunity by explicitly linking social and environmental goals to economic development goals." . . . The third strategy involved developing a regional collaborative mechanism for major problem-solving, in particular for linking high-technology development to smart growth and amenities. . . . The Austin case illustrates how far-sighted regions are recognizing that continued success in the high-technology economy will turn on the ability to deliver environmental quality, natural amenities, and the lifestyle desired by knowledge workers. (Florida 2005, 66–67)

So, according to Florida, the competitive race against other cities for more members of the so-called creative class is the reason why Austin's growth coalition shifted in the late 1990s to encouraging the City Council to make strategic investments that would increase the city's stock of social and ecological capital, especially by using its powers over urban planning.

Contra Florida, a body of scholarship has emerged that argues, in varying ways, that urban sustainability and urban competitiveness have not converged. Instead, the priorities associated with improving environmental quality or social opportunity are only selectively incorporated into an urban growth agenda. In particular, these principles are used in the innovative redesigning and upgrading of areas of a city that have been relatively underdeveloped, but the goal is to make them more attractive to middle-class professionals. Florida is often the target of criticism because he has supported a broad range of redevelopment programs, such as gentrification, that have been shown to exacerbate regional inequalities. Yet nearly all of his detractors concede that the primary factor driving cities to transform their urban forms and planning regimes is the competitive struggle to capture the small pool of knowledge economy elites—that is, young, highly educated, mobile, and (primarily) white people. Here is how Eugene McCann, in an article about Austin, put it:

> Contemporary urban policy-making aimed at nurturing, attracting, and retaining the group of workers and capitalists Richard Florida dubs the Creative Class has partly entailed the deployment of a particular geographical imagination. This imagination is underpinned by an ideal of vibrant, creative urban neighborhoods and by

> a mental map of cities to be learned from in terms of good urban policy and to be competed against for creative talent and high-tech investment. This geographical imagination and its intrinsic spatial frames are important, I suggest, because they are causal stories that encourage and legitimate specific policy interventions in the built environment and in the economic base of cities. (McCann 2008, 9)

Like Florida, then, McCann argues that the principal reason Austin's growth coalition supported the development of a new urban planning framework for the city was the framework's ability to attract and retain members of the so-called creative class.

Although I am sympathetic to McCann's interpretation (and make a similar argument elsewhere in this book), I wager that a different account can be offered for a probable connection between Austin's ability to continue to garner private investment, related to the knowledge economy, and the business community's willingness to link social and environmental goals with economic development. Essentially, I propose that the business community supported planning programs and goals designed to help leading knowledge-intensive firms in Austin, including the university, gain a competitive advantage from the temporal benefits that will flow from the massive investments to refashion the city's urban form. Any environmental or social benefits of this planning regime may be serendipitous. What this means is that the business community's leading organizations did not have to consider social or ecological benefits when supporting the city's new dominant urban planning framework and its attempt to engineer a new spatial and temporal configuration.

Today, the pressures of time and speed, as they relate to the ease of coordination, are essential for the competitive advantage of highly knowledge-intensive firms (Sassen 2011). As a consequence, spatial considerations are vital because despite the ability of communication technologies to more speedily link places together, some temporal benefits can be realized only when there is considerable spatial centralization—for instance, in a specific office building, a central business district, or a specialized research park. However, as in the past, firms face a significant spatiotemporal dilemma because access to the places that may give a firm the greatest temporal advantages comes at a very high financial cost, as landowners, understanding these benefits, demand a high rent for use of this prime real estate. Hence, some firms choose to locate in a less-than-prime place, often in an agglomeration of firms concentrated in a marginal area, because the monetary savings in rent may be greater than the competitive advantages that could be gained from being in a better location. However, the relative differences among locations can be diminished by urban planning efforts that enhance the connectivity of a polynucleated region and bring its central nodes into better communication with one another. On the one hand, this would help diminish the temporal disadvantages that some firms suffer as a result of their location. On the other hand, it would assist in locking in future high real estate values

in existing centers of development because of the massive physical infrastructure investments that are made to link these areas more easily to one another. Moreover, promoting temporal efficiency and spatial cohesion would produce significant ecological and social benefits, particularly if infrastructural improvements were made in the form of better mass transit, more connected and denser housing, and an enhanced information and telecommunications network.

Additionally, the more connected and densely organized a city's urban form becomes, the more its university (or group of universities) becomes embedded in the local network of knowledge-intensive firms. In turn, the competitiveness of the regional innovation system will be improved because ties between the university and local firms will accelerate the transfer of knowledge from the university to the firms and, therefore, facilitate the creation of new knowledge-based commodities (Cooke 2005). Moreover, saving time pays huge dividends in the knowledge economy for at least two additional reasons. First, substantial returns from technological or knowledge rents require scientific discoveries that are then transformed into tradable goods and disseminated as commercially viable products. However, science advances only as a collective social enterprise, and while new research breakthroughs can be made at tremendous private or individual effort and expense, similar discoveries are often made simultaneously in many places. Thus, being the first person (or group) to make the claim on a new discovery is paramount. Second, scientific discoveries, and in fact most information that is pressed into knowledge-based products, are by their very nature nonrivalrous (their use by one person does not preclude their use by another, nor is their quality denuded if others use them). While the generalized dissemination of knowledge can be restricted by enforcing legally granted monopolies or by keeping the new findings a secret, once knowledge is shared (by theft, accident, or some other means), it can be easily copied and employed by anybody, threatening its potential commercial value. Thus, there is an urgency in patenting new knowledge as quickly as possible, bringing original discoveries to market very rapidly, and pushing firms to adopt them immediately. Therefore, in order to save time, it is crucial for the university to be in close proximity, or at least connected as seamlessly as possible, to a concentration of other knowledge-intensive firms and other specialized producer services that can turn scientific discoveries into profitable streams of revenue.

While the account I have given above is rather general, let us now turn to the specific vision of growth and Austin's future urban form found in the transit plan developed in the city over about the last decade, in order to get a sense of the relationship between the regional Smart Growth (now urban sustainability) planning goals and the knowledge economy and to understand why the local growth coalition has so enthusiastically endorsed this plan. First, let us look at Austin's first commuter train, which opened in 2010 and is an essential part of this plan. Although the train's route is strange because it was forced to share a preexisting train track, it connects the entertainment district (located

in the central business district) and the rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods in East Austin to some of the fastest-growing nodes of development for high-technology firms in the northwestern suburbs. Perhaps more telling is the vision found in the more comprehensive program for mass transit, which was embodied in Project Connect, the failed transportation bond initiative of 2014. Certainly the business community had a lot to like in that specific bond package because it contained two implicit development priorities: (1) it linked the financing for only a small section of the proposed urban mass transit system to a group of contentious new road projects in Austin's suburbs; (2) it prioritized future redevelopment goals, particularly the prospective increases in population density and land values that would occur along the proposed rail line, over the needs of existing communities that were the most likely to be its users. Moreover, one of the explicit priorities of the proposed mass transit system was to provide a new link to the main campus of the University of Texas. However, the proposed rail line would have done little to help the thousands of undergraduates and employees commuting to and from the university because its projected route was along the remote eastern edge of the main campus. Instead, the main beneficiaries of the new mass-transit connection would be the proposed biotechnology research hub as well as the new medical center and the innovation district of knowledge-based firms that are being built just east and south of the university. Furthermore, it would have connected these new areas of growth to the burgeoning residential redevelopments found in the East Riverside Corridor and the Mueller Community; the regional airport; and the advanced producer services, such as commercial banks, financial firms, and specialized law offices, located in the central business district.

The interpretation I have provided shows that it is possible to account for the agreement between contemporary economic processes and efforts to rework Austin's urban form without offering that the city's business community has embraced (or not embraced) a stronger commitment to the goals associated with urban sustainability. To this extent, the literature's focus on individual preferences appears overstated: modest improvements in regional transportation efficiency and greater housing density, regardless of intention, will have some selective ecological benefits. Should future urban research move its focus back to the behavior of firms? No! Instead, the question is whether urban planning should always be subordinated to the enhancement of a city's or region's competitive position. I now turn toward this question.

Future

I ended the first chapter of this book by suggesting that many attempts to create a different kind of Austin have been foreclosed by a mixture of local and

global circumstances, but I also suggested that understanding how these forces have shaped development in Austin could open up new opportunities for reimagining the city's future. I even went so far as to suggest that revealing these processes might allow us to advocate for different, possibly better, forms of regional development that would invest in the quality of development rather than its quantity.

The results of these approximately fifteen years of sustainable urbanism in Austin have been mixed. Despite some laudable efforts, between 1990 and 2010, Austin's urbanized land area grew by 150 percent, and the population of its "never-urbanized" area increased by about 160 percent; as a result, the density of urbanized areas in the city decreased by approximately 15 percent (Lewis, Knaap, and Schindewolf 2012). Moreover, over the same period, there were some interesting trends in the Austin MSA's Gini Coefficient (a statistical measurement used to capture how much the distribution of income within an economy at some fixed spatial scale deviates from a perfectly equal distribution). Although the coefficient for the entire MSA decreased by 0.061 (to 0.780), when only the urbanized area is measured, the coefficient rose by 0.010 (to 0.360). A coefficient closer to 1 represents greater inequality, so these changes suggest that while income was deconcentrated across the region, probably because of rapid population growth in the suburbs, a few people within the existing urbanized areas controlled a greater share of the area's income. A more telling figure, however, might be that from 1999 to 2010 poverty rates in the Austin MSA grew much faster than in other Texas cities, from approximately 14 percent of the population to 21 percent. These figures rose much more dramatically, from circa 21 percent to 30 percent and from 19 percent to 31 percent, for Hispanics and African Americans, respectively (Murdock 2013). Finally, it is worth noting that Austin has the distinction of being the only U.S. city with a population over five hundred thousand that has grown by more than 10 percent over the last decade while losing a portion of its African American population at the same time (Tang and Ren 2014). Many variables have influenced this trend, and it has been taking place for a long time, but it is interesting that the neighborhoods of the city that had the highest concentration of African American residents have been prime targets for recent planning initiatives designed to promote greater urban sustainability.

I have been critical of Smart Growth (or what is now called sustainable urbanism) in this book, but I do think this development paradigm can offer something to our efforts to reimagine and possibly create a better collective urban future. Smart Growth is not a set of values that is reducible to the beliefs and practices of a dominant group of planners or a single interest group. Instead, it is a pliable set of ideals, perhaps too protean for some, that is composed of a vast assortment of competing, often contradictory, value systems (Dierwechter 2008). In Austin, the most dominant variant of Smart Growth is technocratic,

has a narrowly focused conceptualization of what counts as an environmental problem, and is strongly aligned with the growth coalition's agenda. For these reasons, there seems to be a persistent problem in meeting sustainability targets associated with the goals of social equity, although meeting environmental goals is also a problem. So there is an urgent, and realizable, task at hand: challenging assumptions about what constitutes sustainable urbanism, recognizing its limitations, and demanding that its goals can be achieved only if democratic control over local and regional planning is expanded. In other words, there may be real opportunities for change in the current state of development, and our task is not just to imagine a brighter urban future but also to bask in the possibilities that confront us in the present.

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